Not God
Main grace

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EIGHTEEN
SERMONS

Preached by the late

Rev. GEORGE WHITEFIELD, A.M.

On the following SUBJECTS:

SERMON
I. A Faithful Minister's parting Blessing.
II. CHRIST, the Believer's Refuge.
III. Soul Prosperity.
IV. The Gospel, a dying Saint's Triumph.
V. Repentance and Conversion.
VI. Glorifying GOD in the Fire, or the right Improvement of Affliction.
VII. The Beloved of GOD.
VIII. The Furnace of Affliction.
SERMON
IX. The LORD our Light.
X. Self-Enquiry concerning the Work of GOD.
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XIII. Spiritual Baptism.
XIV. Neglect of CHRIST the killing Sin.
XV. All Mens Place.
XVI. GOD, a Believer's Glory.
XVII. Jacob's Ladder.
XVIII. The Good Shepherd.

Taken verbatim in Short-Hand, and faithfully Transcribed by JOSEPH GURNEY.

Revised by ANDREW GIFFORD, D.D.

LONDON:

Printed for and sold by JOSEPH GURNEY, Bookseller, N° 54, in Holborn, opposite Hatton-Street.

M.DCC.LXXI.

[Price Five Shillings in Boards.]

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

SELINA

COUNTESS DOWAGER OF

HUNTINGDON

THESE SERMONS

ARE MOST HUMBLY INSCRIBED

BY HER LADYSHIP's

MOST DEVOTED

AND OBEDIENT

HUMBLE SERVANT

JOSEPH GURNEY.

TO THE

READER.

POſthumous publications generally need an apology. This poor Orphan's plea is, that it attempts to preſerve the genuine remains of One who has inconteſtibly proved himſelf the deſtitute helpleſs Orphan's friend yet ſpeaking to a ſerious auditory hanging on his lips for inſtruction, and comfort, though in a fainter light, as the glorious luminary of the heavens, the ruler of the day, ſeems viſible, even after it is ſet, by the refraction of its reſplendent rays. As to its ſpots, if ſuch there are, let them be put down to the account of the editor.

A. G.

Errata.

Page 51, line 24, for *to* read *for*
- 82, - 11 and 16, for *needy* read *naughty*
- 220, - 10 and 11, for *ſtars* read *palms*

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GOD *is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, Selah. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most-High: God is in the midst of her, she shall not be*

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SERMON I.

A Faithful Miniſter's Parting Bleſſing.

PROPERTY O
PRINCET
THEOLOGI
SEMINAR

REVELATIONS xxii. 21.

The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all. Amen.

IT is very remarkable that the old teſtament ends with the word curſe; whereby we are taught, that the law made nothing perfect: but bleſſed be God, the new teſtament ends otherwiſe, even a precious bleſſing, that glorious grace put into the heart, and dropt by the pen of the diſciple whom Jeſus loved.

My brethren, as the providence of God calls us now to bid each other a long farewel, can I part from you better than in enlarging a little upon this ſhort but glorious prayer; can I wiſh

you, or you me, better in time and eternity, than that the words of our text may be fulfilled in our hearts, *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen.* In opening which,

First, it will be proper to explain what we are to understand by the word grace.

Secondly, what by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and its being with us all; and then to observe upon the word Amen: shewing you why it is that every one of us may wish, that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with us all.

Perhaps, there is not a word in the book of God that has a greater variety of interpretations put upon it than this little, this great word grace: I don't intend to spin out, or waste the time by giving you all. It will be enough in general to observe, that the word grace signifies favour, or may imply the general kindness that God bears to the world; but it signifies that here which I pray God we may all experience, I mean the grace, the special grace of the blessed God communicated to his people; not only his favour displayed to us outwardly, but the work of the blessed Spirit imparted and conveyed inwardly and most powerfully to our souls, and this is what our church

church in the catechiſm calls ſpecial grace; for though Jeſus Chriſt in one reſpect is the Saviour of all, and we are to offer * Jeſus Chriſt univerſally to all, yet he is ſaid in a ſpecial manner to be the ſaviour of them that believe; ſo that the word grace is a very complex word, and takes in all that the bleſſed Spirit of God does for a poor ſinner, from the moment he firſt draws his breath, and brings him to Jeſus Chriſt, till he is pleaſed to call him by death; and as it is begun in grace, it will be ſwallowed up in an endleſs eternity of glory hereafter; this is called the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: why ſo? becauſe it is purchaſed † for us by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: the law was given by Moſes, but grace and truth, in the moſt emphatical manner, came by Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God, If it was not for the purchaſe of a Mediator's blood, if it was not that Jeſus Chriſt had bought us with a price, even with the price of his own blood, you and I ſhould never have had, you and I could never have had the grace of God manifeſted at all to our ſouls. The covenant of works being broken, our firſt parents ſtood convicted before God: they were criminals, though they did

* Preach. † Procured.

not care to own it; condemn'd before God, and in themselves, so that like their children they made excuses for their sin. Man by nature had but one neck, and if God had pleased to have done it, he might justly have cut it off at one blow; but no sooner had man incurred the curse of the law, but behold a Mediator is provided under the character of the seed of the woman, which should bruise the serpent's head; implying what the Redeemer was first to do without, and afterwards to do in the hearts of all his people: well therefore are we taught in our church collects to end all our prayers with the words, *through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Moreover, brethren, this grace may be called the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, because it is not only purchased * by him, but it is conveyed into our hearts through Christ; the federal head of his glorious body, is a head of influence to those for whom he shed his blood: thus his disciples said, he was full of grace and truth, and out of his fulness we, all that are true believers, receive grace for grace; grace upon grace, says Mr. Blackwall, in his Sacred Classicks: grace for grace, that is,

* Procured.

is, ſays Luther, every grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus, will be by his bleſſed Spirit tranſcribed into every believer's heart, even as the warm wax receives the impreſs of the ſeal upon it; as there is line upon line upon the ſeal left upon the wax, ſo in a degree, though we come greatly ſhort of what the law requires, the grace that is in Jeſus Chriſt is, in a meaſure, implanted in our ſouls; but the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, bleſſed be God, has our ſtock in his hands. God truſted man once, but never will more; he ſet Adam up, gave him a bleſſed ſtock, placed him in a paradiſe of love, and he ſoon became a bankrupt, ſome think in twenty-four hours, however, all agree it was in ſix or ſeven days, and that he never had but one ſabbath; but now, bleſſed be God, we are under a better diſpenſation, our ſtock is put into Chriſt's hands, he knows how to keep it, and us too; ſo this grace may be ſaid to be the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſecured by his blood, and conveyed to our ſouls by his being the head of his church and people.

This grace has a variety of epithets put to it, and I queſtion whether there is any kind of grace but what the Lord Jeſus Chriſt exerciſes towards his people ſome way or other, every hour, every moment of the day. Firſt,

First, His restraining grace; why, if it was not for this, God's people would be just as weak and wicked as other folks are: remember what David said when Abigail came to him; he was going to kill a neighbour for affronting him, forgot that he was a Psalmist, and was only acting as a creature: blessed be God, says he, that has sent thee to meet and keep me: My brethren, we may talk what we please, and build upon our own stock; we are just like little children that will walk by themselves; well, says the father, walk alone then, they tumble down, get a broken brow, and then are glad to take hold of the father: thus Jesus Christ is always acting in a restraining way to his people; if it was not so, by the blindness of their understandings, the corruptions of their hearts and affections, together with the perverseness of their will, alas! alas! there is not a child of God that would not run away every day, if Christ did not restrain him!

Secondly, There is convicting grace, which from the Lord Jesus Christ acts every day and hour. Oh! it is a blessed thing to be under the Redeemer's convicting grace! a man may speak to the ear, but it is the Spirit of God alone

alone can ſpeak to the heart: I am not ſpeaking of convicting grace that wounds before converſion, and gives us a ſenſe of our ſin and miſery; no, I mean convicting grace that follows the believer from time to time. If a heathen Socrates could ſay, that he had always a monitor with him to check him when he did amiſs, and direct him when he went right, ſurely the Chriſtian may ſay, and bleſſed be God for it, that he has got a Jeſus that kindly ſhews him when he goes aſtray, and by his grace puts him into the way of righteouſneſs, that his feet may not ſlip; this is what the ſhepherd does to his ſheep when they have wandered; what does the ſhepherd do, but ſends ſome little cur, his dog, after them, to bring them to the fold again? what does Jeſus Chriſt do in temptations, trials, and afflictions? he fetches his people home, and convinces them that they have done amiſs.

Then, thirdly, There is the converting grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Oh! what poor unhappy creatures are they, that think they can turn to God when they pleaſe, to which abominable principle it is owing, that they leave it till they cannot turn in their beds: Satan tells them then, it is too late, their conſciences

sciences are filled with horror, and they go off in a whirlwind; may this be the case of none here! That is a most excellent prayer in our Communion Office, *Turn us, O good Lord, and we shall be turned*; we can no more turn our hearts than we can turn the world upside down; it is the Redeemer, by his Spirit, must take away the heart of stone, and by the influence of the holy Spirit give us a heart of flesh. I might as well attempt to reach the heavens with my hand; I might as well go to some church-yard and command the dead to rise; I might as soon shake my handkerchief and bid the streams divide, and they give way, as to expect a soul to turn to God without the grace of the Mediator. Come, my dear hearers, I am of a good man's opinion, that prayed he might be converted every day. In the divine life, not to go forwards is to go backwards; and it is one great part of the work of the Spirit of God, to convert the soul from something that is wrong to something that is right, every day, hour, and moment of the believer's life, so that in short his life is one continued act of converting grace: there is not a day but there is something wrong; there is something we want to have taken away; we want

want to get rid of the old man, and to get more of the new man, and ſo the Spirit of God works every day: O! my brethren, God give us more of this converting grace!

Then there is eſtabliſhing grace. David prays, *Create in me a new heart, and renew a right ſpirit within me*; in the margin, it is conſtant ſpirit; and you hear of ſome that are rooted and grounded in the love of God, and the apoſtle prays, that they may always abound in the work of the Lord: again, it is good to have the heart eſtabliſhed with grace: there is a good many people have ſome religion in them, but they are not eſtabliſhed; hence they are mere weather-cocks, turned about by every wind of doctrine; and you may as ſoon meaſure the moon for a ſuit of clothes, as ſome people that are always changing; this is for want of more grace, more of the Spirit of God; and as children grow that are got ſtronger and riper, ſo as people grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, they will be more ſettled, more confirmed: on firſt ſetting out they prattle, but they will be more manly, more firm, more ſteady: young Chriſtians are like little rivulets that make a large noiſe, and have ſhallow water; old Chriſ-

tians are like deep water that makes little noise, carries a good load, and gives not way.

What think you, my brethren, of the Redeemer's comforting grace? O! what can you do without it? *In the multitude of my thoughts within me,* says the Psalmist, *thy comforts have refreshed my soul.* I believe you will all find what lord Bolinbrooke, in spite of all his fine learning, and deistical principles, found when under affliction; he sent a letter which I saw and heard read to me, at least that part of it in which he says: *Now I am under this affliction, I find my philosophy fails me.* With all our philosophy and striving, it is too hard to work ourselves into a passive state: alas! it is commendable to strive, but we shall never be content, we shall never be chearful under sufferings, but through the assistance of the Redeemer. Even now, in respect of parting from one another, what can comfort friends when separated but the Spirit of God. Paul, when going away for Jerusalem, said, *What mean ye to weep and to break my heart?* he also says, *I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus,* which he could not have said, had he not felt the comforting grace of Jesus Christ.

Our

Our Lord, when going away, ſays, *I will ſend the Comforter*; I will not leave you comfortleſs and helpleſs, I will come again: the Lord helps the believer from time to time. We can eaſily, my brethren, talk when not under the rod ourſelves; there is not a phyſician or apothecary in London but can give good advice, but when they are ſick themſelves, poor ſouls! they are juſt like their patients, and many times are more impatient than thoſe they uſed to preach patience to; ſo it is with the greateſt Chriſtian, we are all men of like paſſions, there is not one of us when under the rod, if left to ourſelves, but would curſe God, and, Ephraim like, *be as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke*; and there are many here, I do not doubt, that have ſaid to the Redeemer, *What doſt thou?* or, perhaps, with Jonah, *We do well to be angry*; if the Lord does but take away his goard from us, if he is pleaſed to baulk us in regard to the creatures, how uncomfortable are we? and there are ſo many afflictions and trials, that if it was not for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt's comfortings, no fleſh could bear them.

In a word, what think you, my brethren, of the quickning grace of our Lord Jeſus

Christ? Remember David says, *Quicken me according to thy word, quicken me in thy way, quicken me in thy righteousness:* God's people want quickening every day; this is trimming our lamps, girding up the loins of our minds, stirring up the gift of God that is in us. It is just with a soul as it is with the plants and trees; how would it be with them if the Lord did not command quickening life to them after the winter? the believer has his frosty and winter days, and wo be to them that think they have always a summer; the believer at times can say, *The winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land, the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell,* Cant. ii. 12. What is all this but God's quickening grace, restoring the believer to his blessed joy. Oh! my brethren, I have not time to show you in how many ways the Redeemer's grace is displayed; but wherever this grace is, what reason have you that are partakers of it, and I, to pray that it may be with us all; *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,* says John here, *be with you all:* it is not said all ministers, it is not said all of this

this or that particular people, but with all believers. O! my friends, remember what Mr. Henry ſaid, he deſired to be a Catholic, but not a Roman Catholic. I have often thought ſince I went to ſee the water-works, that it was an emblem of Chriſt; there is a great reſervoir of water from which this great city is ſupplied; but how is it ſupplied from that reſervoir? why by hundreds and hundreds of pipes: but where does this water go, does it go only to the diſſenters or to the church people, only to this or that people? no, the pipes convey the water to all; and I remember when I ſaw it, it put me in mind of the great reſervoir of grace, that living water that is in Chriſt Jeſus, and the pipes are the ordinances by which his grace is conveyed to all believing ſouls, God grant we may be of that happy number. O what a mercy it is that Chriſt has ſaid, *I will be with you always even to the end of the world*, Matt. xxviii. 20. and therefore we muſt look upon this prayer to be as efficacious now, as it was the moment the words dropt from the apoſtle's pen. I believe the moſt minute philoſophers, and thoſe that have the greateſt ſkill in aſtronomy, cannot perceive there has been any abatement in the heat of the

ſun

ſun. ſince God firſt commanded it to rule the day, then ſurely, if my God can make a ſun that for ſo many thouſands of years ſhall irradiate, enlighten, and warm the world, without loſing any of its light and heat, ſo does the ſun of righteouſneſs, the Son of God, ariſe upon the children of God with healing under his wings; he raiſes, warms, nouriſhes, and comforts his people, and we have the goſpel on the ends of the earth, as well as thoſe who had the honour of converſing with him in the days of his fleſh. I mention this in anſwer to all thoſe who have wrote againſt the Methodiſts, and repreſented them as fanatics; there is no other way of talking againſt the divine influence, but by allowing it was ſo formerly, but that it is not ſo now; they ſay the primitive Chriſtians had it, but it is not to be ſo with us now as it was formerly. O my brethren, what fools theſe great men are when they talk about things they know nothing of; give them a polyglot, give them a lexicon, give them a geographical text, or the chronological part of the ſcripture, they have ſomething to ſay; but when they come to talk of the Spirit of God, they ſee the word Spirit, and they read the word grace, but while they read it their hearts cry, becauſe

their

their knowledge puffs them up, ſurely if it was ſo, we great men that have been in the univerſity ſhould have it, God would give it us; and becauſe they find it not in themſelves, their abominable pride will not own it may be in any. Pray what was Peter, James, and John, I don't mean to ſpeak diſreſpectfully of them, they were as weak, as blind, as obſtinate, and worldly-minded as others, till Jeſus Chriſt changed their hearts; and that ſame grace that changed their hearts, changes now the hearts of God's people; and bleſſed be God, that ſame grace is with all his people.

It is ſo in his ordinances. Here is the difference between a Formaliſt and a Chriſtian; the Formaliſt goes to ordinances, but then he does not feel the God of ordinances, and that is the reaſon moſt formal people don't care to go to church very often: who cares to go to the houſe of a perſon he does not love? they will only juſt knock at the door, and aſk if ſuch a perſon is at home, and are very glad to hear the ſervants ſay their maſter or miſtreſs is not at home; the viſit is paid; ſo it is with many people that go to church and meeting; and I do not doubt but there are many Methodiſts, hundreds and hundreds, that have been

at

at the ordinances, who never felt the God of ordinances converting them to this day.

The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is with his people in prayer. Who can pray without grace? they may laugh at it as will, but God give you and I a ſpirit of prayer; let them laugh as they pleaſe; what profit will it be to us to read this book without the grace of God. What a horrid blunder has the biſhop of G——r been guilty of? What do you think his lordſhip ſays, in order to expoſe the fanaticiſm of the Methodiſts? Why, ſays he, they ſay they cannot underſtand the ſcriptures without the Spirit of God. Can any man underſtand the ſcriptures without the Spirit of God helps him? Jeſus Chriſt muſt open our underſtanding to underſtand the ſcriptures, and the Spirit of God muſt take of the things of Chriſt and ſhow them unto us; as we are taught to pray, *O Lord, thou haſt cauſed thy holy ſcriptures to be written*, &c. as in the ſecond Sunday in Advent; and here the b—p pretends to tell us, there is no need of it; here our collect and b——p diſagree very much. So with reſpect to all ordinances it is the ſame: what ſignifies my preaching, and your hearing, if the Spirit of God does not enlighten? Formal miniſters can ſteal a ſermon,

mon, and add a little out of their own heads, but a miniſter of the goſpel cannot preach to purpoſe without the aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God, no more than a ſhip can ſail without wind. As for a carnal man he may take his ſermon in his pocket, and you will find his ſermons always the ſame; but ſpiritual preachers are ſeldom ſo; ſometimes they are in darkneſs, ſo as to ſpeak to thoſe that are in darkneſs; ſometimes they are tempted, ſo as to ſpeak to thoſe that are tempted; ſometimes they have a full gale, and go before the wind, and this is all by the aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God, and without this a man may preach like an angel, and do no good at all. So in reſpect to hearing the word of God, I declare I would not preach again, if I did not think that God would accompany the word by his Spirit: what are we but *ſounding braſs and tinkling cymbals?* If the word is preached in the ſtrength of the Spirit, it will be attended with convictions, and converſions, and the grace of God will be both with preacher and hearer.

The grace of God is with his people in *his providence.* Oh! ſays biſhop Hall, a little aid is not enough for me. My going on the waters puts me in mind of what I have ſeen

many times: if the sailors perceive a storm a coming, they do not chuse to speak to the passengers for fear of frightening them, they will go quietly on deck, and give orders for proper care to be taken; and if a sailor can tell of storms approaching by the clouds, why can't God's people tell why God does so and so with them? The people of God eye him in his providence; the very hairs of their heads are all numbered, and the grace of God is with them in the common business of life. Some people think that the Methodists preach so and so to make them neglect their business; and we preach at unseasonable times: we would not preach at this time, but that we are going to part from one another; no, we preach that the grace of God may attend them in their counting-houses, and wo be to those persons that do not take the grace of God with them into their counting-houses, and in their common business. O what blessed times would it be if every one made the grace of God their employ, that when the Lord comes he may say, Lord, here I am waiting for thee.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with his people when *sick* and when *dying*. O my dear souls, what shall we do when death comes?

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What a mercy it is that we have got a good maſter to carry us through that time! As a poor converted Negro that ſaw a believer who was dying in comfort, ſaid, Maſter don't fear, Jeſus Chriſt will carry you ſafe through the dark valley of the ſhadow of death.—But the time would fail, if I was to ſhow you in how many reſpects *the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt* helps us; but what I have ſaid will ſhow, that we need all join in a hearty Amen; Amen, I pray God it may be ſo, ſo it is, ſo may it be! May be what? why that *the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, *convicting*, *reſtraining*, *converting*, *eſtabliſhing* and *comforting grace*, may be with us in his ordinances, in his providences, in ſickneſs, and when dying: then, bleſſed be God, we ſhall carry it with us after time. And now, my dear hearers, by the help of my God, in whoſe ſtrength I deſire once more to go upon the waters, I ſhall pray wherever I am, that this *grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt may be with you all.*

To whom ſhall I ſpeak firſt by way of improvement? Are there any of you here unconverted? no doubt too many. Are there any of you here this morning come out of curioſity to hear what the babler has to ſay? Many, per-

haps, are glad it is my last sermon, and that London is to be rid of such a monster: I don't doubt but it has been a pleasant paragraph for many to read; but whoever there are of you that are unconverted, or whatever you may think, sure you cannot be angry for my wishing that the *grace of God may be with you*. O that it may be with every unconverted soul. O pray for me, my dear friends, that the Lord may bless me to some unconverted soul; what wilt thou do if the grace of God is not with thee? what wilt thou do with the favour of man if thou hast not got the grace of God? you will find, my brethren, it will not do, you cannot do without the grace of God when you come to die. There was a nobleman that kept a deistical chaplain, and his lady a christian one; when he was dying, he says to his chaplain, I liked you very well when I was in health, but it is my lady's chaplain I must have when I am sick. Do you know that you are nothing but devils incarnate? Do you know that every moment you are liable to eternal pains? The Lord help thee to awake O sinner, awake, awake thou stupid soul, if the grace of God was never with thee before, God grant it may now. Don't say I part with you in

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an ill humour; don't ſay that a madman left you with a curſe. Bleſſed be God that when firſt I entered into the field, (and bleſſed be God that honoured me with being a field-preacher) I proclaimed the grace of God to the worſt of ſinners, and I proclaim it now to the vileſt ſinner under heaven; could I ſpeak ſo loud as that the whole world might hear me, I would declare that the grace of God is free for all poor ſouls that are willing to accept of it by Chriſt; God make you all willing this day.

There are many of you, I doubt not, but have got this grace, and I believe there are many of you that can ſay that this poor deſpiſed place was that which God honoured firſt with giving it you: but whether you were converted here, or elſewhere, if you have got the grace of God, the Lord grant you more grace; *grace, mercy and peace be multiplied unto you all.* My brethren, they that have got Chriſt never have enough of him; you want more grace every day, and hour, and moment: I ſee for my part more of my want of grace than I did ten or twenty years ago; may be that is becauſe I don't grow in grace; but thoſe that grow in grace will grow every day more ſenſible of their want of grace, they will feel their

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weakness more and more every day. Some who are called Christians are a most foul-mouth people, they abuse their neighbours, but real believers abuse themselves most, and call themselves, *i. e.* what is in themselves, the worst of neighbours. O my brethren, may the Lord Jesus Christ's grace be with you more and more, that you may be transformed into the divine likeness, and pass from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. May God grant that this grace may be with you all, particularly those young men that have given up their souls to Christ. It delights my soul when I go round the communion table, to see how many young souls have given themselves to Christ, the Lord grant that you may not return again to folly. O young men, flee youthful lusts; O young women, the Lord Jesus Christ grant that grace may be with you all, that you may study the beauties of the mind, shine in the beauties of holiness, and be wise to everlasting salvation.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all that are in the marriage state. It needs much grace to bear with heavy trials, much grace to deal with servants, children, and under disappointments in trade; to walk with God with a pure heart. Some people think

think it clever to have wives and children, but they want a thouſand times more grace than they had when they were ſingle; you have need of much grace to honor God in your houſes, much grace to teach you to be prophets, much grace to teach you to be kings in the family; to know, when to be pleaſed; to know, when to be ſilent; to know, when to be angry: but the greateſt grace is to be angry when called to it, to be angry without ſin. O! may the grace of God be with you all in your cloſets, every time you pray, every time you come to an ordinance; O! may the grace of God be with you all when you frequent this deſpiſed place! bleſſed be God ſome may ſay, that ever it was built; though as ſoon as it was built I was called away. As ſoon alſo as the chapel was built I was then called away, and ſo am now; and when I came out of my chamber, I could hardly ſupport it. I would as lieve go to an execution, if my way was not very clear; what is dying? that is but for a moment. O may the grace of God be with all, that preach the goſpel here. Bleſſed be God his grace has been with them; don't let the world ſay, he is gone, and all the people are gone now;

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don't weaken the hands of those that shall labour here; I should not mention such a word if I was not going away. The Lord Jesus Christ grant that you may keep steady, and honor the preachers more and more; there will be good Mr. Adams, blessed be God, from time to time, with Mr. Beridge, and so there will be a blessed change: may the Spirit of God be with them, and you, more and more! and O my dear friends, if the Lord God has vouchsafed to own these labours to any of you, do remember me in a particular manner, when gone; for though my body has been weak, yet I thank God that he has enabled me to speak when called to it.

And so I must go, whether well or ill; pray, that if it should please God to spare me, that I may speak more effectually to you, when I come back again; pray, that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ may be with me in a restraining, comforting, supporting, and transforming way, that it may be with me when I am sick, and when I die. O my brethren, I see I want the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, in every one of these respects, every moment; O may the Lord God bless you all that have been kind to me, and forgive

give every thing that I have done amiſs. I am aſhamed of myſelf, ſo much of the man comes up with me, though I humbly hope, and dare to ſay, that at the bottom my heart is upright towards God; I would employ it to his praiſe, but there is ſo much ſin mixed with all I do, that was not the blood of Chriſt conſtantly applied to my ſoul, and the grace of God continually manifeſted to me, I could not preach any more. You may ſee a thouſand things wrong in me, but I ſee ten thouſand more, O may *the Grace of God be with you all.* Now, dear friends, farewel! dear tabernacle, farewel! if I never preach here any more; O that we may meet in a better tabernacle, when theſe tabernacles are taken down, when theſe bodies ſhall drop, when we ſhall be for ever with the Lord. I muſt have done, I can't bear it; *the Lord bleſs you, the Lord God cauſe his face to ſhine upon you.* I cannot ſay more, I dare not: *The Grace of our Lord Jeſus be with you all, Amen.*

SERMON II.

CHRIST the Believer's Refuge.

PSALM xlvi. 1—6.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, Selah. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High: God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early.

THERE was a tradition among the ancient Jews, that the manna which came down from heaven, though it was a little grain like coriander-seed, yet suited every taste; as milk unto babes, and strong

ſtrong meat to grown perſons. Whether this ſuppoſition be founded on fact or not, the obſervation will hold good in a great meaſure reſpecting the ſayings of David; for if we have eyes to ſee, and ears to hear, if God has been pleaſed to take away the veil from our hearts, we ſhall find, by happy experience, that let our circumſtances be what they will, the book of Pſalms may ſerve as a ſpiritual magazine, out of which we may draw ſpiritual weapons in the time of the hotteſt fight, eſpecially thoſe that are under trouble, *when the hand of the Lord is gone* ſeemingly *forth againſt them*; when unbelief is apt to make them ſay, *all theſe things are againſt me!* if we can have the preſence of mind to turn to the book of Pſalms, we may find ſomething there ſuitable to our caſe, a word to refreſh us in purſuing our ſpiritual enemy. This is true of the 46th Pſalm in particular, part of which I have juſt now read to you, and which I pray the bleſſed Spirit of God to apply to every one of our hearts. It is uncertain at what time, or upon what occaſion, David wrote it; probably under ſome ſharp affliction, which made him eloquent; or when the affliction was over, when his heart was ſwim-

ing with gratitude and love, and when out of the fulneſs of it his pen was made *the pen of a ready writer.* It was a favourite Pſalm with Luther; for whenever Melancthon, who was of a melancholy turn, or any other of his friends, told him ſome ſad news, he uſed to ſay, come, come, let us ſing the 46th Pſalm; and when he had ſung that, his heart was quiet. May every true mourner here, and afflicted perſon, experience the ſame! I know not when I read it which to admire moſt, the piety, or the poetry; the matter, or the manner; and I believe I may venture to defy all the criticks on earth to ſhew me any compoſition of Pindar, or Horace, that any way comes up to the diction of this Pſalm conſidered only as human: he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear, *God is our refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble.* Stop here, my friends, let us pauſe a while, and before we go further, may the Lord help us to draw ſome comfort from this very firſt verſe: for obſerve, it is not ſaid, *God is* my *refuge*; David ſays ſo in another Pſalm, but he ſays here, *God is* our *refuge:* he ſpeaks in the plural number, implying, that this Pſalm was of no private interpretation, but was intended

tended for the comfort and encouragement of all believers, till time ſhall be no more. Obſerve the climax, *God is our refuge*, is one degree; *God is our ſtrength*, another; *God is our help*, and not only ſo, but is a *preſent help*, yea, *is a very preſent help*, and at a time when we want it moſt, *in the time of trouble*. It is here ſuppoſed, that all God's people will have their troubles, *man is born to trouble, as the ſparks fly upward*; and if we are born to trouble as men, we are much more ſo as chriſtians. We forget ourſelves, and the ſtation in which God has placed us, when we ſo much as begin to dream of having much reſpite from trouble while we are here below. The decree is gone forth like the laws of the Medes and Perſians, it alters not; through tribulation, through much tribulation, we muſt all go; but bleſſed be God we are to be carried through it; and bleſſed be God, glory is to be the end of it: may God give us to know this by happy experience! *in the world*, ſays our bleſſed Lord, *ye ſhall have tribulation*, tribulation and trouble of different kinds; and in another place, *if any man will come after me*, ſays he, *let him take up his croſs daily, and follow me*; ſo that the day, when we take up no croſs, we may ſay as Titus did, when

when he reflected that he had done no good that day, I have loſt a day! But then what ſhall we do, my dear hearers, when trouble comes, when one trouble comes after another, and afflictions ſeem to purſue us wherever we go, ſeem to ariſe up out of the ground, meet us as we are walking along? why bleſſed be God, if we have an intereſt in Chriſt, mind that, if we have an intereſt in Chriſt, God is our help, God is our aſylum, our city of refuge, a place appointed by God himſelf, to which the purſued ſaints may fly by faith, and be ſafe. The wicked have no notion of this; when they are in trouble, what is their refuge? let a ſoul be under ſpiritual trouble, and cry out *what ſhall I do to be ſaved?* let him go to a carnal miniſter, an unconverted wretch that knows nothing about the matter, he ſhall be told, oh! go, and play an innocent game at cards, and divert yourſelf; that is to ſay, the devil muſt be your refuge. Wordly people have worldly refuges; and Cain would ſeem as if he was in earneſt when he ſaid, *my puniſhment is greater than I can bear:* what does he do, he goes and diverts himſelf by building a city, goes and amuſes himſelf by building. The devil, my brethren, will give

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you leave to amuſe yourſelves; you may have your choice of diverſions, only take care to be diverted from God, and the devil is ſure of you; but the believer has ſomething better: faith *ſweeps away the refuge of lies*, and the believer turns to his God, and ſays *O my God, thou ſhalt be my refuge.* The devil purſues me, my falſe friends have deſigns againſt me, my own wicked heart itſelf moleſts me, *my foes are thoſe of my own houſe*; but do thou, O God, be my refuge I will fly there; by theſe it may be ſaid, *God is our refuge.* The queſtion is, what ſhall I do to make him my refuge? how ſhall I be helped to do ſo? you bid me fly; you ſay, I may fly there, but where ſhall I get wings? how ſhall I be ſupported? Here is a bleſſed word, *God ſhall not only be our refuge*, but *God ſhall be our ſtrength* alſo. Strength, what is ſtrength? why, my brethren, to make every day of trouble ſo eaſy to us by his power, as to carry us through it; God has ſaid, and will ſtand to it, *as thy day is, ſo ſhall thy ſtrength be.* Afflictions even at a diſtance will appear very formidable, when viewed by unbelief. Our fears ſay, O my God, if I come to be tried this or that way, how ſhall I bear it? but we don't know what

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we can bear till the trial comes, and we do not know what strength God can give us, or what a strong God he will be, till he is pleased to put us into a furnace of affliction; and therefore it is said, not only that *God is our refuge and our strength*, but that *God is our help* also. What help? why, my dear friends, help to support us under the trouble; help so as to comfort us as long as the trouble lasts; and blessed be God, that the help will never leave us, till we are helped quite over and quite through it. But what kind of an help is it? O blessed be God, *he is a very present help.* We may have an helper, but he may be afar off; I may be sick, I may want a physician, and may be obliged to send miles for one; he might be a help if he was here, but what shall I do now he is at a distance. This cannot be said of God, he is not only a help, but he is a *present help: the gates of the new Jerusalem are open night and day.* We need not be afraid to cry unto God; we cannot say of our God as Elijah does of Baal, *perhaps he is asleep, or talking, or gone a journey:* it is not so with our God, *he is a present help*; he is likewise a sufficient help, that is, *a very present help*, and that too *in the time of trouble.*

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It is but to ſend a ſhort letter, I mean a ſhort prayer, upon the wings of faith and love, and God, my brethren, will come down and help us. Now to this David affixes his *probatum eſt*, David proves it by his own experience, and therefore if *God is our refuge*, therefore if *God is our ſtrength*, if *God is our help*, if *God is a preſent help*, if *God is a very preſent help*, and that too *in a time of trouble*, what then? *therefore will we not fear*.—Therefore, is an inference, and it is a very natural one, a concluſion naturally drawn from the foregoing premiſſes; for Paul ſays, *if God be for us, who can be againſt us?* There is not a greater enemy to faith than ſervile fear and unbelief. My brethren, the devil has got an advantage over us when he has brought us into a ſtate of fear; indeed in one ſenſe we ſhould always fear, I mean with a filial fear; *bleſſed is the man*, in this ſenſe, *that feareth always:* but, my brethren, have we ſtrong faith in a God of refuge? this forbids us to fear; ſays Nehemiah, *ſhall ſuch a man as I flee?* and the Chriſtian may ſay, ſhall a believer in Jeſus Chriſt fear? ſhall I fear that my God will leave me? ſhall I fear that my God will not ſuccour me? no, ſays David, *we will not fear*; how ſo? why *though*

the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Where is Horace, where is Pindar, now? let them come here and throw their palms down before the sweet singer of Israel. There is not such a bold piece of imagery in any human composition in the world. Can any thing appear more great, more considerable than this? Imagine how it was with us some years ago, when an enthusiastic fool threatened us with a third earthquake; imagine how it was with us when God sent us the same year two dreadful earthquakes; had the earth been at that time not only shook, but removed, had the fountains of the sea been permitted to break in upon us, and carry all the mountains of England before it, what a dreadful tremor must we all unavoidably have been in? David supposes that this may be the case, and I believe at the great day it will be something like it: the earth and all things therein, are to be burnt up; and, my brethren, what shall we do then if God is not our refuge, if God is not our strength?

We may apply it to civil commotions: David had lately been beset with the Philistines,

tines, and other enemies, that threatened to deprive him of his life; and there are certain times when we ſhall be left alone. This alſo, my brethren, may be applied to creature-comforts: ſometimes the earth ſeems to be removed, what then? why all the friends we take delight in, our moſt familiar friends, our ſoul-friends, friends by nature, and friends by grace, may be removed from us by the ſtroke of death; we know not how ſoon that ſtroke may come, it may come at an hour we thought not of; the mountains themſelves, all the things that ſeem to ſurround and promiſe us a laſting ſcene of comfort, they themſelves may ſoon be removed out of our ſight, what then ſhall we do? *they may be carried into the midſt of the ſea*; what is that? our friends may be laid in the ſilent grave, and *the places that knew them may know them no more.* It is eaſy talking, but it is not ſo eaſy to bear up under theſe things: but faith, my brethren, teaches us to ſay, though all friends are gone, bleſſed be God, God is not gone. As a noble lady's daughter told her mother, when ſhe was weeping for the death of one of her little children, a daughter four years old ſaid, Dear mamma, is God Almighty dead, that you cry

ſo long after my ſiſter? No, he is not dead, neither does he ſleep. But here the imagery grows bolder, the painting ſtronger, and the reſemblance more ſtriking, *though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains ſhake with the ſwelling thereof*; what won't this make us fearful? will not this ſhake us off our bottom, our foundation, and take up the roots? No, no, even then the believer need not fear; why, *God is in the midſt of her.* Don't you remember God ſpoke to Moſes out of the buſh? did he ſtand at a diſtance, and call to him at a diſtance from the buſh? no, the voice came out of the buſh, *Moſes! Moſes!* as Mr. Ainſworth, who was a ſpiritual critic, ſays.

Learn from hence, *that in all our afflictions God is afflicted; he is in the midſt of the buſh*; and oh! it is a ſweet time with the ſoul when God ſpeaks to him out of the buſh, when he is under affliction, and talks to him all the while. Though it was threatened by the fire which ſurrounded it with immediate and total deſolation; *yet the buſh burned, and was not conſumed.* I do not know whether I told you, but I believe I told them at Tottenham-court, and perhaps here, that every chriſtian has got

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a coat of arms, and I will give it you out of Chriſt's heraldry, that is the *burning buſh*; every chriſtian is burned, but not conſumed. But how is it the ſaint is held up, whence does he get this ſtrength; or how is this ſtrength, this ſupporting, comforting ſtrength, conveyed to his heart? read a little further, you ſhall find David ſay, *there is a river*, mind that, *there is a river the ſtreams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Moſt High*; need I tell you, that probably here is an alluſion to the ſituation of Jeruſalem, and the waters of Shiloah, that flowed gently through the city of Jeruſalem, which the people found ſweet and refreſhing in the time of its being beſieged. So the rivers run through moſt of the cities in Holland, and bring their commodities even to the doors of the inhabitants. Pray, what do you think this river is? why, I believe it means the covenant of grace; O that is a river, the ſprings of which firſt burſt out in Paradiſe, when God ſaid, *the ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the ſerpent's head*; then God made this river viſit the habitation of man, as the firſt opening of his everlaſting covenant.

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No ſooner had the devil betrayed man, and thought he was ſure to get him into the pit, even when he was laughing at man's miſery, and thinking he was revenged of God for driving him out of heaven; at that very time did the great God open this river, and made it flow down in that bleſſed ſtream to mankind, implyed in thoſe words, *it ſhall bruiſe thy head.* O this is a ſtream which, I pray, may this night *make glad* this part of *the city of God.* If by the river we underſtand the covenant of grace, then, my brethren, the *promiſes* of God are the ſtreams that flow from it. There is no promiſe in the Bible made to an unbeliever, but to a believer; all the promiſes of God are his, and no one knows, but the poor believer that experiences it, how glad it makes his heart. God only ſpeaks one ſingle word, or applies one ſingle promiſe; for if when one's heart is overwhelmed with ſorrow, we find relief by unfolding ourſelves to a faithful diſintereſted friend; if a word of comfort ſometimes gives us ſuch ſupport from a miniſter of Chriſt, O! my friends, what ſupport muſt a promiſe from God applied to the ſoul give? and this made a good woman ſay, I have oft had a bleſſed meal on the promiſes

miſes, when I have had no bread to make a meal for my body.

But by the river we may likewiſe underſtand, the *Spirit* of the living God. If you remember, Jeſus Chriſt declared at the great day of the feaſt, *if any man believe on me, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water; this,* ſaith the beloved diſciple, *ſpake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive.* My brethren, the divine influences are not only a conduit, but a deep river, a river of broad waters. Here is room for the babes to walk, and for the man of God to bathe and ſwim in from time to time; and ſuppoſing that the river means the Spirit of God, as I believe really it does, why then the ſtreams that flow from this river are the means of grace, the ordinances of God, which God makes uſe of as channels, whereby to convey his bleſſed Spirit to the ſoul. Nay, by the river we may underſtand, *God himſelf* who is the believer's river, the Three-one, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. This river is in the midſt of the city, not at the court-end of the town only, or one corner, or end, but quite through, in a variety of ſtreams, ſo that high and low may come to it for ſupply; and not only be ſupported,

ſupported, but have their hearts made glad daily thereby; God help us to drink afreſh of this river. If this be the caſe, well may David triumph and ſay, *glorious things are ſpoken of the city of God*; are ſpoken of *her*, in the feminine gender. The church is ſpoken of in that ſenſe, becauſe Eve, the firſt woman, was the mother of all believers; we may apply this to a ſingle ſaint, as well as to a community, under trouble, *ſhe ſhall not be moved*; not moved? pray, would you have them ſtupid? do you love when you ſtrike a child, to ſee it hardened and regardleſs? do you not like the child ſhould ſmart under it and cry, and when it is a little penitent, you almoſt wiſh you had not ſtruck it at all. God expects, when he ſtrikes, that we ſhould be moved; and there is not a greater ſign in a reprobate heart of a ſoul given over by God, to have affliction upon affliction, and yet *come out like a fool brayed in a mortar*, unmoved and hardened. My brethren, this is the worſt ſign of a man or woman's being given over by God. Jeſus was moved, when he was under the rod; he cries, *father! if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me!* he was moved ſo as to ſhed tears, tears of blood, falling to the ground.

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Woe, woe, woe be to us, if when God knocks at the door by ſome ſhocking domeſtic or foreign trial, we don't ſay, *my God! my God!* wherefore doſt thou ſtrike? When we are ſick we allow phyſicians to feel our pulſe, whether it be high or languid; and when we are ſick, and tried with affliction, it is time to feel our pulſe, to ſee if we were not going into a high fever, and do not want ſome ſalutary purge. It is expected therefore that we ſhould be moved; we may ſpeak, but not in a murmuring way: Job was moved, and God knows when we are under the rod, we are all moved more than we ought to be in a wrong way; but when it is ſaid here, *ſhe ſhall not be moved*, it implies, not totally removed; *perplexed*, ſays the apoſtle, *but not in deſpair*; *perſecuted*, *but not forſaken*; *caſt down*, *but not deſtroyed*; therefore removal means deſtruction: *when the earth is moved, the mountains ſhake, and the waters roar*, where can we flee? what can we ſee but deſtruction all round us? But, my brethren, ſince *there is a river the ſtreams whereof make glad the city of God*, ſince *God is our refuge*, ſince *God is our ſtrength*, ſince *God is our help*, ſince *God is a preſent help*, ſince *God is a very preſent help in the time of*

trouble, ſince *God is in the midſt of her*, ſince *God cauſes the ſtreams to make her glad*, bleſſed be God, we ſhall not, my brethren, be totally moved; nay, though death itſelf does remove our bodies, though the king of terrors, that griſly king, ſhould come armed with all his ſhafts, yet *in the midſt of death we are in life*, even then *we ſhall not be moved*, even though the body is removed in ſleep, the ſoul is gone where it ſhall be ſorrowful no more. One would have imagined that David had ſaid enough, but pray obſerve how he goes on, he repeats it again, for when we are in an unbelieving frame we have need of *line upon line*, *words upon words*, *God ſhall help her*; ah! but when? when? when will he help her? when will he help her? why, *right early*; *God ſhall help her*, *and that right early*. Why ſometimes we knock for a friend, but he will not get up early in the morning, but *God ſhall help us*, *and that right early*, in the morning. Ah! but, ſay you, I have been under trouble a long while; why God's morning is not come: you ſaid right early; yes, but you are not yet prepared for it, you muſt wait till the precious right moment comes, and you may be aſſured of it. God never gives you one doubt more than

than you want, or even defers help one moment longer than it ought to be.

Now, my dear hearers, if theſe things are ſo, who dares call the Chriſtian a madman? If theſe things are ſo, who would but be a believer? who would not be a faithful follower of the ſon of God? My brethren, did you ever hear any of the devil's children compoſe an ode, that the devil is our refuge; the God of this world, whom we have ſerved ſo heartily, we have found to be a preſent help in time of trouble? ah! a preſent help to help us after the devil: or did you ever hear, ſince the creation, of one ſingle man that dared to ſay, that all the forty-ſixth pſalm was founded on a lie? No, it is founded on matters of fact, and therefore believer, believer, I wiſh you joy, although it is a tautology. I pray God, that from this time forth till we die, you and I, when under trouble, may ſay with Luther, come let us ſing the forty-ſixth pſalm.

As for you that are wicked, what ſhall I ſay to you? are you in high ſpirits to night; has curioſity brought you here to hear what the babler has to ſay on a funeral occaſion? well, I am glad to ſee you here, though I have ſcarce ſtrength to ſpeak for the violence of

the heat, yet I pray God to magnify his ſtrength in my weakneſs; and may the God of all mercy over-rule curioſity for good to you. I intend to ſpeak about this death to the ſurviving friends; but, my dear hearers, the grand intention of having the funeral ſermon to night, is to teach the living how to die. Give me leave to tell you, that however briſk you may be now, there will a time come when you will want God to be your help. Some pulpit may e'er long be hung in mourning for you; the black, the dreary appendages of death may e'er long be brought to your home; and if you move in a high ſphere, ſome ſuch eſcutcheon as this, ſome atchievement may be placed at your door, and woe, woe, woe be to thoſe who in an hour of death cannot ſay, *God is my refuge.* You may form ſchemes as you pleaſe; after you have been driven out of one fool's paradiſe, you may retreat into another; you may ſay, now I will ſing a requiem to my heart, and now I ſhall have ſome pleaſant ſeaſon; but if God loves you he will knock off your hands from that, you ſhall have thorns even in roſes, and it will imbitter your comforts. O what will you do when the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat;

heat; when this earth, with all its fine furniture, ſhall be burnt up; when the archangel ſhall cry, *time ſhall be no more!* whither then, ye wicked ones, ye unconverted ones, will ye flee for refuge? O, ſays one, I will fly to the mountains: O ſilly fool, O ſilly fool, fly to the mountains, that are themſelves to be burnt up and moved. O, ſays you, I will flee to the ſea; O you fool, that will be boiling like a pot: O then I will flee to the elements; they will be melting with fervent heat. I can ſcarce bear this hot day, and how can you bear a hot element? there is no fan there, not a drop of water to cool your tongue. Will you fly to the moon? that will be turned into blood: will you ſtand by one of the ſtars? they will fall away: I know but of one place you can go to, that is to the devil; God keep you from that! Happy they that draw this inference; ſince every thing elſe will be a refuge of lies, God help me from this moment, God help me to make God my refuge! here you can never fail; your expectations here can never be raiſed too high; but if you ſtop ſhort of this, *as the Lord liveth*, in whoſe name I ſpeak, you will only be a ſport for devils; a day of judgment will be no day of refuge to you,

you, you will only be ſummoned like a criminal that has been caſt already, to the bar to receive the dreadful ſentence, *Depart, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* There is no river to make glad the inhabitants of hell, no ſtreams to cool them in that ſcorching element: were thoſe who are in hell to have ſuch an offer of mercy as you have, how would their chains rattle! how would they come with the flames of hell about their ears! how would they rejoice even there, if a miniſter was to tell them, Come, come, after you have been here millions and millions of years, there ſhall come a river here to make you glad. But the day is over; God help us to take warning: and oh! with what gratitude ſhould we approach him to night, for bearing with, and for for-bearing us ſo long; let each ſay to night, why am I out of hell? how came I not to be damned, when I have made every thing elſe my God, my refuge, for ſo many years? May goodneſs lead every unconverted ſoul to repentance, and may love conſtrain us to obedience: fly, fly, God help thee to fly, ſinner; hark! hear the word of the Lord, ſee the world conſumed, the avenger of blood, this grim death, is juſt at thy heels,

heels, and if thou doſt not this moment take refuge in God, to-night before to-morrow, you may be damned for ever; the arms of Jeſus yet lie open, his loving heart yet ſtreams with love, and bids a hearty welcome to every poor ſoul that is ſeeking happineſs in God. May God grant that every unconverted ſoul may be of the happy number.

But, my brethren, the moſt heavy taſk of this night yet lies unperformed; indeed, if my friendſhip for the deceaſed did not lead me to it, I ſhould pray to be excuſed; my body is ſo weak, my nerves ſo unſtrung, and the heat beats too intenſely on this tottering frame, for me to give ſuch a vent to my affections as I am ſure I ſhould give if I was in vigorous health; you may eaſily ſee, though I have not made that application, with what deſign I have choſe this Pſalm; you may eaſily ſee by the turn, I hope no unnatural one, that has been given to the text as we have paſſed along, that I have had in my view a mournful widow here before me. Did I think when this black furniture was taken from the pulpit when two branches were lopt off within about a year one after another, both lopt off from on earth, I hope and believe to be planted for ever in hea-

heaven, little did I think that the axe was in a few months time to be laid to the root of the father; little did I think that this pulpit was then to be hung in mourning for the dear, the generous, the valuable, the universally benevolent, Mr. Beckman; a benefactor to every body, a benefactor to the Tabernacle; he has largely contributed both to the Chapel and Tabernacle, and, my dear hearers, now his works follow him, for he is gone beyond the grave. Such a singular circumstance I believe rarely happens, that though I was last night at near eleven o'clock dead almost with heat, I thought if death was the consequence, I would go to the grave and have the last look at my dear departed friend; to see a new vault opened; to see a place of which he has been, in a great measure, the founder; to see a place which he was enlarging at the very time he died; to see a new vault there first inhabited by the father, and two only sons, and all put there in the space of two years time, Oh! it was almost too much for me, it weighed me down, it kept me in my bed all this day; and now I have risen, God grant it may be to give a seasonable word to your souls. Oh! my friends, put yourselves in the state of a surviving

ving widow, and then ſee who is ſecure from cutting providences. The very children when they are young are a trial; but the young man for whom a handſome fortune awaited; for a tender loving father to have his ſon taken away; for the widow to have the huſband taken away ſoon after; indeed, dear madam, you had need read the forty-ſixth Pſalm; you may well ſay, *call me no more Naomi*, that ſignifies pleaſant, but *call me Marah, for the Lord hath dealt bitterly with me.* Theſe are ſtrokes that are not always given to the greateſt ſaints. Such ſudden ſtrokes, ſuch blow upon blow, Oh! if God is not a ſtrength and refuge, how can the believer ſupport under it? but bleſſed be the living God, I am a witneſs God has been your ſtrength, I am witneſs that God has been your refuge; you have found, I know you have, already, that *there is a river*, a river in which you have ſwam now for ſome years, *the ſtreams whereof make glad* your waiting heart. Surely I ſhall never forget the moment in which I viſited your deceaſed huſband, when the hiccoughs came, and death was ſuppoſed to be really come, to ſee the diſconſolate widow flying out of the room, unable to bear the ſight of a departing

huſband: I know that God was then your refuge, and God will continue to be your refuge. You are now God's peculiar care, and as a proof that you will make God your refuge, you have choſen to make your firſt appearance in the houſe of God, in the Tabernacle, where I hope God delights to dwell, and where you met with God, and which I hope you will never leave till God removes you hence. Whatever trials may yet await you, remember you are now become God's peculiar care. You had before a huſband to plead for you; he is gone, but your pleader is not dead, he lives, and will plead your cauſe; may you find him better to you than ten thouſand huſbands; may he make up the awful chaſm that death has made, and may the Lord God be your refuge in time, and your portion to all eternity; and then you will have a bleſſed change. You are properly a *Naomi*; I would humbly hope that your daughter-in-law, which ſo lately met with a ſtroke of the ſame nature, will prove a *Ruth* to you, and though young, and having a fortune, ſhe may be tempted to take a walk in the world, yet I hope ſhe will ſay, *where thou goeſt, I will go; where thou lodgeſt, I will lodge; thy people*

ple ſhall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou dieſt, will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do ſo to me, and more alſo, if ought but death part thee and me. It is to your honour, madam, and I think it right to ſpeak of it, you had the ſmiles of your departing father-in-law, you had behaved with deference and love; he was very fond of you; God make you a comfort to your ſurviving mother, who has adopted you, and may the Lord Jeſus Chriſt enable you to take God to be your portion.

As for you that are the relations of the deceaſed, there is one of you that has been honourably called to the ſervice of the miniſtry: you, ſir, was ſent for over by an endearing uncle, you have been a ſtranger in a ſtrange land: the Palatines will bleſs your miniſtry; God has, I hope, bleſſed it, and provided you a place to preach in. May God grant that that church may be filled with his preſence and his glory; and you, madam, be made the inſtrument of ſending the news to heaven to your huſband, that *this and that man was born of God there.* As for you, the other friends of the deceaſed, may God grant that when you die, and when you are buried, the

people may follow you with tears as they did dear Mr. Beckman laſt night. I was told by one this morning that walked along with the funeral, that it was delightful to hear what the people ſaid when the coffin paſſed by; they bleſſed the perſon contained therein, Oh! he was a father to the poor. The poor have indeed loſt a friend; and I believe there has not been a man, a tradeſman in London, for theſe many years, that has been more lamented than the dear man who now, I hope, is at reſt. You well know how mindful he has been of you, and that ſoon after the deceaſe of his diſconſolate widow, his ſubſtance will be divided among ſome of you. Give me leave to charge and intreat you, by the mercies of God in Jeſus Chriſt, to be kind to the honoured widow. Don't ſay, Mr. Beckman my uncle is dead, come pluck up, let us plague her now ſhe is living, we ſhall have all when ſhe is dead. The plague of God will follow you if you do: if you valued your dear uncle, do all you can to make her life eaſy; pay her that reſpect which you would pay the deceaſed was he now living; this will ſhew your love is genuine, and not counterfeit, and do not *lay up wrath againſt the day of wrath.* Follow the

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example of your dear deceaſed uncle; the gentleman was viſible in him as well as the chriſtian; he would be in his warehouſe early in the morning, that he might come ſoon to his country-houſe, and there employ himſelf in his friendly life, and open the door to the diſciples of Jeſus. It is time to draw to an end, but I will ſpeak a word to the ſervants of the family, who have loſt a good and a dear maſter. May the Lord Jeſus Chriſt be your maſter for ever, that you may be the Lord's ſervants, however you may be diſpoſed of in this world; that you may meet your maſter, your miſtreſs, and all the family, in the kingdom of the living God, then we ſhall have a whole eternity to reflect upon the goodneſs of a gracious God. O may God help us to ſing the forty-ſixth Pſalm; may we find him to be *our ſtrength and our refuge, a very preſent help in the time of trouble*; may the river of the living God make glad your hearts, and may you be with God to all eternity; even ſo, Lord Jeſus, Amen and Amen.

SERMON

SERMON III.

Soul Proſperity.

3 Epiſtle JOHN ii.

Beloved, I wiſh above all things that thou mayſt proſper, and be in health, even as thy ſoul proſpereth.

WHAT a horrid blunder has one of the famous, or rather infamous, deiſtical writers made, when he ſays, that the goſpel cannot be of God, becauſe there is no ſuch thing as friendſhip mentioned in it. Surely if he ever read the goſpel, *having eyes he ſaw not, having ears he heard not*; but I believe the chief reaſon is, his heart being waxen groſs, he could not underſtand; for this is ſo far from being the caſe, that the world never yet ſaw ſuch a ſpecimen of ſteady and diſintereſted friendſhip, as was diſplayed in the life, example, and conduct of Jeſus of Nazareth.

John,

John, the writer of this epistle, had the honour of leaning on his bosom, and of being called, by way of emphasis, *the disciple whom Jesus loved*; and that very disciple, which is very remarkable concerning him, though he was one of those whom the Lord himself named Sons of Thunder, *Mark* iv. 17. and was so suddenly, as bishop Hall observes, turned into a son of lightning, that he would have called down fire from heaven to consume his Master's enemies; consequently, though he was of a natural fiery temper, yet the change in his heart was so remarkable, that if a judgment may be formed by his writings, he seems as full of love, if not fuller, than any of his fellow apostles. He learned pity and benevolence of the father of mercies; and to show how christian friendship is to be cultivated, he not only wrote letters to churches in general, even to those he never saw in the flesh, but private letters to particular saints, friends to whom he was attached, and wealthy rich friends, whom God had, by his Spirit, raised up to be helpers of the distressed. Happy would it be for us, if we could all learn that simplicity of heart which is displayed in these particular words; happy if we could learn this

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one rule, never to write a letter without something of Jesus Christ in it; for, as Mr. Henry observes, if we are to answer for idle words, much more for idle letters; and if God has given us our pens, especially if he has given us *the pen of a ready writer*, it will be happy if we can improve our literary correspondence for his glory and one another's good. But what an unfashionable stile, if compared to our modern ones, is that of the apostle to Gaius. The superscription *from the elder to the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth*; there is fine language for you! Many who call themselves Christ's disciples, would be ashamed to write so now. *I send this, and that, and the other*; *I send my compliments.* Observe what he stiles himself, not as the pope;* but he stiles himself the elder. A judicious expositor is of opinion, that all the other apostles were dead, and only poor John left behind. I remember a remark of his, "the taller we grow, the lower we shall "stoop." The apostle puts himself upon a level with the common elders of a church, that

* Whether Universal Bishop, or Vicar of Christ, Supreme Head, Lord or Governor of the World, or a more blasphemous title, is uncertain, the writer not hearing distinctly the Latin words in which it was expressed.

that he might not seem to take state upon him, not to rule as a lion, but with a rod of love; *the elder to the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.* This Gaius seems to be in our modern language, what we call a gentleman, particularly remarkable for his hospitality, *Gaius mine host*; and this Gaius was well-beloved, not only beloved, but well-beloved; that is, one who I greatly esteem and am fond of; but then he shows us likewise upon what this fondness is founded, *whom I love in the truth.* There are a great many people in writing say, *dear sir*, or *good sir*, and subscribe *your humble servant, sir*; and not one word of truth either in the beginning or end; but John and Gaius's love was in truth, not only in words, *but in deed and in truth*; as if he had said, my heart goes along with my hand while I am writing, and it gives me pleasure in such a correspondence as this, or *whom I love for the truth's sake*, that is, whom I love for being particularly attached to the truth; and then our friendship has a proper foundation, when the love of God, and the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, is the basis and bond of it. One would think this was enough now; the epistles originally were not divided into verses as now that peo-

ple may the better find out particular places, though perhaps not altogether ſo properly as they might. The apoſtle's ſaying *beloved* is not needleſs tautology, but proves the ſtrength of his affection; *I wiſh that thou mayſt proſper, and be in health, even as thy ſoul proſpereth.* Gaius, it ſeems, at this time felt a weak conſtitution, or a bad habit of body; this may ſhow, that the moſt uſeful perſons, the choiceſt favourites of heaven, muſt not expect to be without the common infirmities of the human frame; ſo far from this, that it is often found that a thouſand uſeful Chriſtians have weakly conſtitutions. That great and ſweet ſinger of Iſrael, Dr. Watts, I remember about two and thirty years ago told me that he had got no ſleep for three months, but what was procured by the moſt exquiſite art of the moſt eminent phyſicians; and, my dear hearers, none but thoſe that have ſuch habits of body can ſympathize with thoſe that are under them. When we are in high ſpirits we think people might do if they would, but when brought down ourſelves we cannot; but notwithſtanding his body was in this condition, his ſoul proſpered ſo eminently, ſo very eminently, that the apoſtle could not think it a greater mercy,

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or the church a greater bleſſing, than that his bodily health might be as vigorous as the health of his ſoul. I remember the great colonel Gardiner, who had the honour of being killed in his country's cauſe, cloſes one of his laſt letters to me, with wiſhing I might enjoy a thriving ſoul in a healthy body; but this is peculiar to the followers of Jeſus, they find the ſoul proſpers moſt when the body is worſt; and obſerve, he wiſhes him a proſpering body above all things, that he might have joy and health with a proſperous ſoul; for if we have a good heart, and good health at the ſame time, and our hearts are alive to God, we go on with a freſh gale. I obſerve, that the ſoul of man in general muſt be made a partaker of a divine life before it can be ſaid to proſper at all. The words of our text are particularly applicable to a renewed heart, to one that is really alive to God. When a tree is dead we don't ſo much as expect leaves from it, nor to ſee any beauty at all in a plant or flower that we know is abſolutely dead; and therefore the foundation of the apoſtle's wiſh lies here, that the ſoul of Gaius, and conſequently the ſouls of all true believers, have life communicated to them from the Spirit of the living God.

Such a life may God of his infinite mercy impart to each of us! and I think, if I am not mistaken, and I believe I may venture to say that I am not, that where the divine life is implanted by the Spirit of the living God, that life admits of decrease and increase, admits of dreadful decays, and also of some blessed revivings. The rays of the divine life being once implanted, it will grow up to eternal life; the new creation is just like the old when God said *let there be light, there was light*, which never ceased since the universe was made, and the favourite creature man was born. Upon a survey of his own works, God pronounced *every thing good, and entered into his rest*; so it will be with all those who are made partakers of the divine nature. *The water that I shall give him, shall be a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

My brethren, from our first coming into the world, till our passing out of it to *the spirits of just men made perfect*, all the Lord's Children have found, some more, and others less, that they have had dreadful as well as blessed times, and all has been over-ruled to bring them nearer unto God: but I believe, I am sure, I speak to some this night, that if it was

was put to their choice, had rather know that their ſouls proſpered, than to have ten thouſand pounds left them: and it is ſuppoſed that we may not only know it ourſelves, but that others may know it, *that their profiting*, as Paul ſays, *may appear to all.* Becauſe John ſays, *I wiſh above all things, that thy body may be in health, as thy ſoul proſpers.* O may all that converſe with us ſee it in us! We may frequently ſit under the goſpel, but if we don't take a great deal of care, however orthodox we are, we ſhall fall into practical Antinomianiſm, and be contented that we were converted twenty or thirty years ago, and learn, as ſome Antinomians, *to live by faith.* Thank God, ſay ſome, we met with God ſo many months ago, but are not at all ſolicitous whether they meet with him any more; and there is not a ſingle individual here that is ſavingly acquainted with Jeſus Chriſt, but wiſhes his ſoul proſpered more than his body.

The great queſtion is, how ſhall I know that my ſoul proſpers? I have been told that there is ſuch a thing as knowing this, and that I can be conſcious of it myſelf, and others too. It may not be miſpending an hour, to lay down ſome marks whereby we may know whe-

whether our ſouls proſper or no. If there be any of you of an Antinomian turn of mind, (I don't know there are any of you) I don't know but you will be of the ſame mind of the man that came to me in Leadenhall twenty-five years ago: Sir, ſays he, you preached upon the marks of the new birth. Marks, ſays I, yes, ſir: O thank God, ſays he, I am above marks, I don't mind marks at all: and you may be aſſured perſons are upon the brink of Antinomianiſm, that ſay away with your legal preaching. I wonder they don't ſay as they go along the ſtreets, away with your dials, away with your dials, we don't want marks, we know what it is o'clock without any. If the marks upon the ſoul of a believer are like the ſun-dial, there are marks to prove that we are upon the right foundation: if the ſun does not ſhine on the ſun-dial, there is no knowing what o'clock it is; but let it ſhine, and inſtantaneouſly you know the time of the day; this is not known when it is cloudy; and who dare to ſay but that a child of God, for want of the ſun of righteouſneſs ſhining upon his heart, may write bitter things againſt himſelf. A good man may have the vapours, as one Mr. Brown had, that wrote a book

a book of good hymns, who was ſo vapouriſh, that no body could make him believe he had a ſoul at all. Let the ſun ſhine, the believer can ſee whether the ſun is in the meridian at the ſixth, ninth, or twelfth hour. O that there might be great ſearching of heart. I have been looking up to God for direction; I hope the preaching of this may be to awaken ſome, to call back ſome backſliders, to awaken ſome ſinners that don't care whether their ſouls proſper or no. I don't mean the Tabernacle comers, or the Foundery comers, or the church, or diſſenters, but I ſpeak to all of you, of whatever denomination you are; God of his infinite mercy give you his Spirit. You that are believers, come, let us have that common name among us all; if we have got it, we go off well. If you want to know whether your ſouls proſper, that is, whether they are healthy; you know what a perſon means when he wiſhes your body to proſper; let me aſk you how it is between you and God, with reſpect to ſecret prayer? Good Mr. Bunyan ſays, if we are prayerleſs, we are Chriſtleſs. None of God's people, ſays he, come into the world ſtill-born. Good Mr. Birket (whoſe commentary has gone through

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five or six-and-twenty editions; and yet I think if he was now alive, and to preach once or twice a day, they would cry, Away with his commentary, and preaching and all) speaks to the same purpose. *Come into the world still-born!* what language is that in a preacher's mouth? but it will do for those that like to use marks and signs. *I will pour out a Spirit of grace and supplication*, says the Lord; and I will venture to say, if the Spirit of grace resides in the heart, the Spirit of supplication will not be wanting. Persons under their first love dare not go without God; they go to God, not as the formalist does, not for fear of going to hell, or being damned. It is a mercy any thing drives to prayer; and a person under the spirit of bondage, that has been just brought to the liberty of the sons of God, goes freely to his heavenly father, under the discoveries and constraints of divine love. Come, I will appeal to yourselves; did not you, like a dear fond mother, if the child, the beloved child, made but the least noise in the world, O, says the mother, the dear child crys, I must go and hush it: so time was, when many hearkened to the call of God, and could no more keep from the presence of God in secret, than a fond

fond mother from the presence of her dear child. Now if your souls do prosper, this connection between you and God will be kept up; I don't say that you will always have the same fervour as when you first set out; I don't say you will always be carried up into the third heavens; the animal spirits possibly will not admit of such solace; but you should enquire with yourselves, whether you would be easy to be out of God's company? Steal from behind your counter, and go and converse with God. Sir Thomas Abney, who was observable for keeping up constant prayer in his family, being asked how he kept up prayer that night he was sworn in Lord-Mayor? Very well, says he, I got the company into my room, and entertained them, and when the time came, I told them I must leave them a little, while I went and prayed with my family, and returned again. God grant we may have many such Lord-Mayors. If our souls prosper, the same principle will reign in us, and make us conscientiously attend on the means of grace. It is a most dreadful mark of an enthusiastic turn of mind, when persons think they are so high in grace, that they thank God they have no need of ordi-

nances. Our being the children of God, is so far from being the cause of our wanting no ordinances, that, properly speaking, the ordinances are intended for the nourishing of the children of God; not only for the awaking the soul at first, but for the feeding the soul afterwards. If the same nourishment the child receives before, feeds it after it is born; and as the manna never failed, but the children of Israel partook of it daily while in the wilderness, till they came to Canaan, so we shall want our daily bread, we shall want the God of grace and mercy to convey his divine life into our hearts, till we get into the heavenly Canaan. There faith will be turned into vision, and then we shall not want ordinances; and let people say what they will, if our souls prosper we shall be glad of ordinances, we shall love the place where God dwells; we shall not say, *such a one preaches and I will not go*, but if we are among them we shall be glad of a good plain country dish, as well as a fine garnished desert; and if our souls prosper, we shall be fond of the messengers as well as the message: we shall admire as much to hear a good ram's-horn, such as blowed down the walls of Jericho, as a fine silver trumpet. So

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in all the ordinances of the Lord, that of the Lord's-ſupper for example; if the ſoul does not attend thereon, it is an evidence that it does not proſper. It is a wonder if that ſoul has not done ſomething to make it afraid to meet God at his table. *Adam, where art thou?* ſays the eternal Logos to his fallen creature; and every time we miſs, whether we think of it or no, the Redeemer puts it down; but if our ſouls proſper, how ſhall we run to the table of the Lord, and be glad to come often to the commemoration of his death.

I will venture to affirm farther, that if your ſouls proſper, you will grow downwards. What is that? why you will grow in the knowledge of yourſelves. I heard, when I was at Liſbon, that ſome people there began at the top of the houſe firſt. It is odd kind of preaching that will do for the Papiſts, reſting merely in externals. The knowledge of ourſelves is the firſt thing God implants. *Lord, let me know myſelf*, was a prayer that one of the Fathers put up for ſixteen years together; and if you have high thoughts of yourſelves, you may know you are light-headed, you forget what poor ſilly creatures you are. As our ſouls proſper we ſhall be more and more ſenſi-

ble, not only of the outſide, but of the inſide; we firſt battle with the outward man, but as we advance in the divine life, we have nearer views of the chambers of imagery that are in our hearts; and one day after another we ſhall find more and more abominations there, and conſequently we ſhall ſee more of the glory of Jeſus Chriſt, the wonders of that Immanuel, who daily delivers us from this body of ſin and death; and I mention this, becauſe there is nothing more common, eſpecially with young Chriſtians. I uſed formerly to have at leaſt a hundred or two hundred in a day, who would come and ſay, O dear, I am ſo and ſo, I met with God; ah! that is quite well: a week after they would come and ſay, O, ſir, it is all deluſion, there was nothing in it; what is the matter? O never was ſuch a wretch as I am, I never thought I had ſuch a wicked heart. Oh! God cannot love me; now, ſir, all my fervour, and all that I felt is gone; and what then? does a tree never grow but when it grows upward? ſome trees I fancy grow downward; and the deeper you grow in the knowledge of yourſelf, the deeper you grow in the knowledge of God and his grace, that diſcovers the corruptions of your hearts. Do

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not you find that aged men look back upon some former states. I know some people can't look back to see how many sins they have been guilty of; but if grace helps us to a sight of our inherent corruptions, it will make us weary of it, and lead us to the blood of Christ to cleanse us from it; consequently, if your souls prosper, the more you will fall in love with the glorious Redeemer, and with his righteousness. I never knew a person in my life that diligently used the word, and other means, but as they improved in grace, saw more and more the necessity of depending upon a better righteousness than their own. Generally when we first set out, we have got better hearts than heads; but if we grow in the divine life, our heads will grow as well as our hearts, and the Spirit of God leads out of abominable self, and causes us to flee more and more to that glorious and compleat righteousness that Jesus Christ wrought out.

The more your souls prosper, the more you will see of the freeness and distinguishing nature of God's grace, that all is of grace. We are all naturally free-willers, and generally young ones say, O we have found the Messiah, of whom Moses and the prophets spoke; which

which is right, except that word *we* have found; for the believer a little after learns, that the *Messiah* had found him. I mention this, because we ought not to make persons offenders for a word; we should bear with young Christians, and not knock a young child's brains out, because he cannot speak in blank verse.

Let it not be forgotton also, that the more your souls prosper, the more you will get above the world. You cannot think that I mean you should be negligent about the things of this life. Nothing tries my temper more, than to see any about me idle; an idle person tempts the devil to tempt him. In the state of paradise Adam and Eve were to dress the garden, and not to be idle there; after the fall they were to till the ground: but if any body says that the Methodists think to be idle, they injure them. We tell people to rise and be at their work early and late, that they may redeem time to attend the word. If all that speak against the Methodists were as diligent, it would be better for their wives and families. What do you think a true Methodist will be idle? no, he will be busy with his hands, he knows time is precious, and there-

therefore he will work hard that he may have to give to them that need, and at the ſame time he will live above the world; and you know the earth is under your feet, ſo is the world. When he goes to ſleep he will ſay, I care not whether I wake more. I can look back, and tell you of hundreds and hundreds that once ſeemed alive to God, and have been drawn away with a little filthy, naſty dirt. How many places are there empty here, that have been filled with perſons that once were zealous in their attendance? As a perſon the other day, to whoſe having a place it was objected, that he was a Methodiſt; no, ſays he, I have not been a Methodiſt theſe two years. I do not, for my part, wiſh people joy when they get money; only take care it does not get into, and put your eyes out; if your money increaſes, let your zeal for good works increaſe. Perhaps ſome ſtranger will ſay, I thought you was againſt good works. I tell you the truth, I am againſt good works, don't run away before I have finiſhed my ſentence; we are againſt good works being put in the room of Chriſt, as the ground of our acceptance; but we look upon it, if we have a right faith, our faith will work by love.

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Ever ſince I was a boy, I remember to have heard a ſtory of a poor indigent beggar, who aſked a clergyman to give him his alms, which being refuſed, he ſaid, will you pleaſe, ſir, to give me your bleſſing; ſays he, God bleſs you: O, replied the beggar, you would not give me that if it was worth any thing. There are many who will talk very friendly to you, but if they ſuppoſe you are come for any thing, they will run away as from a pick-pocket; whereas, if our ſouls proſpered, we ſhould *count it more bleſſed to give than to receive.* When we riſe from our beds this would be our queſtion to ourſelves, what can I do for God to day? what can I do for the poor? have I two, or five, or ten talents? God help me to do for the poor as much as if I knew I was to live only this day.

In a word, if your ſouls proſper, my dear hearers, you will grow in love. There are ſome good ſouls, but very narrow ſouls; they are ſo afraid of loving people that differ from them, that it makes me uneaſy to ſee it. Party ſpirits creep in among Chriſtians, and whereas it was formerly ſaid, *ſee how theſe Chriſtians love one another!* now it may be ſaid, *ſee how theſe Chriſtians hate one another!*

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I declare from the bottom of my heart, that I am more and more convinced that the principles I have preached are the word of God. Pray what do you do at Change; is there such a thing as a Presbyterian, or Independent, or Church-walk there? is there any chambers there for the Presbyterians, and Independents, and Churchmen to deal in? People may boast of their wildfire-zeal for God, till they can't bear the sight of a person that differs from them. The apostle commends Gaius for his catholic love, for his love to strangers. That was a glorious saying of a good woman in Scotland, *Come in*, says she, *ye blessed of the Lord*; I have a house that will hold a hundred, and a heart that will hold ten thousand. God give us such a heart; *he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God.* I could mention twenty marks, and so go on wire-drawing till nine or ten o'clock; but it is best to deal with our souls as with our bodies, to eat but little at a time. It is so with preaching; though I don't proceed any farther in my discourse, God bless what has been said.

But is there a child of God here that can go away without a drooping heart? I don't speak that you may think me humble: I love sin-

cerity, inward and outward, and hate guile. When I think what God has done to me, how often he has pruned me, and dug and dung'd about me, and when I think how little I have done for God, it makes me weep if possible tears of blood; it makes me cry, *O my leanness, my leanness*, as I expressed myself with my friend to day. This makes me long, if my strength of body would permit, to begin to be in earnest for my Lord. What say you, my dear friends, have all of you got the same temper? have you made the progress you ought to have done? O London! London! highly favoured London! what would some people give for thy privileges? what would the people I was called to preach to but this day se'ennight? A good, a right honourable lady, about three-and-twenty miles off, has brought the gospel there. The people that I preached to longed and thirsted after the same message; they said, they thought they never heard the truth before. You have the manna poured out round the camp, and I am afraid you are calling it *light bread*; at least, I am afraid you have had a bad digestion. Consider of it, and for Jesus Christ's sake tremble for fear *God should remove his candlestick from among*

among you. Labourers are sick; those that did once labour are almost worn out, and others they only bring themselves into a narrow sphere, and so confine their usefulness. There are few that like to go out in the fields; broken heads and dead cats are no more the ornaments of a Methodist, but silk scarves. Those honourable badges are now no more: the langour has got from the ministers to the people, and if you don't take care, we shall all fall dead together. The Lord Jesus rouse us, the Son of God rouse us all. Ye should show the world the way, and ye that have been Methodists of many years standing, show the young ones that have not the cross to bear as we once had, what ancient Methodism was.

As for you who are quite negligent about the prosperity of your souls, who only mind your bodies, who are more afraid of a pimple in your faces, than of the rottenness of your hearts; that will say, O give me a good bottle and a fowl, and keep the prosperity of your souls to yourselves. You had better take care what you say, for fear God should take you at your word. I knew some tradesmen and farmers, and one had got a wife perhaps with a fortune too, who prayed they might be

excused, they never came to the supper, and God sent them to hell for it too; this may be your case. I was told to-day of a young woman, that was very well on Sunday when she left her friends, when she came home was racked with pain, had an inflammation in her bowels, and is now a breathless corpse. Another that I heard of, a Christless preacher, that always minded his body, when he was near death he said to his wife, I see hell opened for me, I see the damned tormented, I see such a one in hell that I debauched; in the midst of his agony he said, I am coming to thee, I am coming, I must be damned, God will damn my soul, and died. Take care of jesting with God; there is room enough in hell, and if you neglect the prosperity of your souls what will become of you? what will you give for a grain of hope when God requires your souls? *awake thou that sleepest*; hark! hark! hark! hear the word of the Lord, the living God. Help me, O ye children of God: I am come with a warrant from Jesus of Nazareth to night. Ye ministers of Christ that are here, help me with your prayers: ye servants of the living God, help me with your prayers. O with what success did I preach in Moorfields when I had

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ten thouſand of God's people praying for me; pray to God to ſtrengthen my body: don't be afraid I ſhall hurt myſelf to-night: I don't care what hurt I do myſelf if God may bleſs it; I can preach but little, but may God bleſs that little. I weep and cry and humble myſelf before God daily for being laid aſide; I would not give others the trouble if I could preach myſelf. You have had the firſt of me, and you will have the laſt of me: the angels of God waited for your converſion, and are now ready to take care of the ſoul when it leaves the rotten carcaſe. The worſt creature under heaven, that has not a penny in the world, may be welcome unto God. However it has been with us in times paſt, may our ſouls proſper in time to come; which God grant of his infinite mercy, Amen.

SER-MON

SERMON IV.

The Goſpel a dying Saint's Triumph.

A Funeral Sermon.

MARK xvi. ver. 15, 16.

And he ſaid unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth not ſhall be damned.

I AM perſuaded I need not inform this auditory, that when ambaſſadors are ſent to a prince, or when judges go their reſpective circuits, it is always cuſtomary for them to ſhow their credentials, to open and read their commiſſions, by which they act in his Majeſty's name. The ſame is abſolutely neceſſary for thoſe who are ambaſſadors of the Son of God, as they would be faithful to their Lord; ſince they are to ſit with him on the throne,

throne, when he shall come the second time to judge both evil angels and men. If any should ask me, where is their commission? it has been just now read unto you. Here it is in my hand, it is written with the King's own hand, by the finger of the ever-blessed God, and sealed with the signet of his eternal Spirit, with his broad seal annexed to it. The commission is short, but very extensive; and it is remarkable, it was given out just before the Redeemer went to heaven; he reserved it in infinite wisdom for his last blessing, to appoint and employ vicegerents to carry on his work on earth. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear* what the Son of God says to a company of poor fishermen. There was not one scholar among them all. What does he say; *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.* Let us pause a while, and before we go further let us see what mercy, what love, and yet withal, what equal majesty are blended in this expression or commission. *Go ye*, ye poor fishermen, ye that the letter-learned doctors will look upon as illiterate men; *Go ye*, that have hitherto been dreaming of temporal preferments, quarrelling *who should sit on my right hand and on my left hand*

hand in my kingdom; *Go ye*, not stay till the people come to you, but imitate the conduct of your Master; *Go ye*, remembring that the devil will not permit souls to be fond of hearing you: Go therefore; where? *into all the world*; there is a commission for you; there never was such a commission on the earth; there never was any like this; *Go into all the world*, that is, into the Gentile as well as the Jewish world. Hitherto my gospel has been confined to the Jews; I once told you, you must not go to the Gentiles; I once told a poor woman that came to me, *it is not meet to take the childrens bread, and give it unto dogs:* but the partition wall being now broke down, the veil of the tempie being now rent in twain, he gave them a universal commission; *Go ye, therefore, into all the world*; how! what go into other ministers parishes? for there was not a district then but what was settled with shepherds, such as they were; yes, yes, *Go into all the world*; and though I will not pretend to say, that this enjoins ministers to go into every part of the world; yet I insist upon it, and by the grace of God, if I was to die for it, I will say, that no power on earth has power to restrain ministers from preach-

preaching where a company of people are willing to hear; and if miniſters were of a right temper, they would ſay as a miniſter did at Oxford, that uſed to viſit the priſoners there; I remember once I went to aſk him whether I might go and viſit ſome of his pariſh, whether he was offended at our going to viſit the priſoners? No, no, ſays he, I am glad I have any ſuch young curates as you. And if miniſters were of ſuch a temper now, O dear the devil would fly before us. As good Mr. Philip Henry ſaid to the miniſter of Broad Oaks, from whence he was ejected, but preached afterwards in a barn, and meeting the miniſter after ſermon was over; *Sir,* ſays Mr. Henry, *I have been making bold to throw a handful of ſeed into your ground.* Thank you, ſir, ſays he, God bleſs it, there is work enough for us both. We may talk of what we will, ſearch into the bottom, it is not for want of light, but of more zeal and love to the Son of God: if we were as warm, and full of the love of God as we ought to be, theſe pretty excuſes we urge to ſave our bones, would not be ſo much as mentioned; we ſhould go out and leave theſe carcaſes to the grace of God. I don't ſee how we can act as prieſts

of the church of England without doing it. Be so kind as read the Ordination Service as soon as you go home; for the office of ordination and consecration of bishops, priests, and deacons, is left out of most of the common prayer books, so that people are as ignorant of it as if it was not. The office of a priest is this: he is not to confine himself to his place, no; what then? why he is *to go forth, and seek after the children of God that are dispersed in this needy world*; these are the very words that the bishop speaks to us when we are ordained; but if we are confined to one particular place, and are to be shut up in one corner, pray how do we seek the children of God that are dispersed in this needy world? Parishes and settled ministers there must be, but we are not, I insist on it, to be hindered from preaching Christ any where, because he bids us *go into all the world*; here is our licence. I acknowledge the Chapel is licensed; here is my licence, and wherever I go I will produce my licence; where? why out of the 16th of Mark; *Go ye, and preach the gospel to all the world:* there is the licence, and the Spirit of Christ helping us to preach by that licence, will make all the devil's children cowards

cowards before us. We have tried them theſe thirty years, would to God we ſet about it now; if I had ſtrength I would ſet about it to-morrow; I only grieve that my body will not hold out for field-preaching, elſe Kennington-Common ſhould be my pulpit, for any place is conſecrated where Chriſt is preſent. Well, what muſt we go forth to do? *Go ye into all the world, and preach*; preach! what is that? why the original word for preach is to ſpeak out, as a crier does that cries goods that are loſt; proclaim it. And Iſaiah would be reckoned a dreadful enthuſiaſt if now alive. How does he preach? he preaches in the King's chapels ſuch language and eloquence as would carry all before it; and yet how does he preach? *Ho, every one that thirſteth.* O, *he lifts up his voice like a trumpet.* And the word preach ſignifies to proclaim; *to cry aloud, and ſpare not.* How do you like one that cries your loſt goods if he only whiſpers? would you chuſe to employ a man that you could not hear two yards? O, ſay you, I ſhall never find my goods: and if perſons have what qualifications they may, if they cannot be heard at all; they need not preach at all. I know a prebend in the cathe-

dral of York, who spoke so very low nobody heard him; somebody said, they never heard such a *moving* sermon in all their lives in that cathedral, for it made all the people *move out*, because they could not hear. The matter of the ministry of the gospel is of infinite importance: unless, my brethren, we could be heard, what do we preach for? It implies earnestness in the preaching, and the preacher. You expect a person, like one that is crying your goods, to be in earnest; and if we preach, and make the King's proclamation, we should be in earnest. It is said, *Christ opened his mouth and taught.* Now a modern critic would laugh at that; open his mouth, say they, how could he speak without opening his mouth? Would it not be better to say, *he taught them?* No, no, there is no idle word in God's book. It is said, *the Lord Jesus opened his mouth:* what for? why, to get in breath that he might speak loud to the people, when the heavens were his sounding board; then did he open his mouth, and taught them in earnest, powerfully; and therefore the people make this observation when he had done speaking, *that he spoke as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.* There is no dispensa-

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tion from preaching, but ſickneſs or want of abilities, to thoſe that are ordained to preach; and therefore it was a proverb in the primitive church, *that it becomes a biſhop to die preaching.* Biſhop Jewell, that bleſſed miniſter of the church of England, gave that anſwer to a perſon that met his lordſhip walking on foot in the dirt, going to preach to a few people. Why does your lordſhip, weak as you are, expoſe yourſelf thus? ſays he, it becomes a biſhop to die preaching. Lord ſend all the world that have biſhops ſuch jewels as he was! Pray what are they to preach? not themſelves. What are they to preach? why they are to preach not morality: not morality! come, don't be frightened, any of you that are afraid of good works don't be frightened this morning: I ſay not morality; that is, morality is not to be the grand point of their preaching; they are not to preach as an heathen philoſopher would. A late biſhop of Lincoln, who has not been dead a long while, ſaid to his chaplain, You are not a miniſter of Cicero, or any of the heathen philoſophers; you are not to entertain your people with dry morality, but remember you are a miniſter of Chriſt; you are, therefore, to preach the goſpel; and if

you

you will not preach the gospel in the church, you must not be angry for the poor people's going out into the fields where they hear the gospel; that is to be your grand theme, *Go into all the world and preach the gospel.*

Now the gospel signifies good news, glad tidings: *Behold I bring you,* said the angel, *glad tidings of great joy.* Mean and contemptible as the office of a preacher may be thought now, the angels were glad of the commission to preach this gospel: and Dr. Goodwin, that learned pious soul, says in his familiar way, and that is the best way of writing, God had but one Son, and he made a minister of him; and I add, he made an itinerant minister of him too. Well, and some say, you must not preach the law; you cannot preach the gospel without preaching the law; for you shall find by and by, we are to preach something that the people must be saved by: it is impossible to tell them how they are to be saved, unless we tell them what they are to be saved from. The way the Spirit of God takes, is like that we take in preparing the ground: do you think any farmer would have a crop of corn next year unless they plow now; and you may as well expect a crop of corn on un-

unplowed ground, as a crop of grace, until the ſoul is convinced of its being undone without a Saviour. That is the reaſon we have ſo many muſhroom converts, ſo many perſons that are always happy! happy! happy! and never were miſerable; why? becauſe their ſtony ground is not plowed up; they have not got a conviction of the law; they are ſtony-ground hearers; *they hear the word with joy, and in a time of temptation*, which will ſoon come after a ſeeming or real converſion, *they fall away*. They ſerve Chriſt as the young man ſerved the Jews that laid hold of him, who, when he found he was like to be a priſoner for following Chriſt, left his garments; and ſo ſome people leave their profeſſion. That makes me ſo cautious now, which I was not thirty years ago, of dubbing people converts ſo ſoon. I love now to wait a little, and ſee if people bring forth fruit; for there are ſo many bloſſoms which March winds you know blow away, that I cannot believe they are converts till I ſee fruit brought forth. It will do converts no harm to keep them a little back; it will never do a ſincere ſoul any harm.

We are to preach the goſpel: to whom? *to every creature:* here is the commiſſion, *every crea-*

creature. I ſuppoſe the apoſtles were not to ſee every creature; they did not go into all nations; they had particular diſtricts; but wherever they did go, they preached. Did you ever hear Paul, or any of the apoſtles, ſent away a congregation without a ſermon? No, no: when turned out of the temple they preached in the highways, hedges, ſtreets, and lanes of the city: they went to the water-ſide; there Lydia was catched. My brethren, we have got a commiſſion here from Chriſt; and not only a commiſſion, but we have a command *to preach to every creature*; all that are willing to hear. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear*; and if ſome ſhall ſay, they will not come if we do preach, would to God we tried them: *where the carcaſe is there will the eagles be gathered together.* We are to preach glad tidings of ſalvation; to tell a poor benighted world, lying in the wicked one the devil, their ſtate and condition: we are to tell them, *God is love*; to tell them, that God loves them better than they do themſelves. We muſt preach the law, but not leave the people there. We muſt tell them how Moſes brings them to the borders of Canaan, and then tell them of a glorious Joſhua that will carry them

them over Jordan; firſt, to ſhew them their wants; and then point out to them a Jeſus that can ſupply, and more than ſupply, all their wants. This we are *to tell every creature*; and it is for this that people ſtone goſpel preachers. I don't think the priſoners would be angry with us if we were to tell them, the king commiſſions us to declare to them that they might come out of their priſon, that their chains may be knocked off. If you was to go to one of them and ſay, Here you have your chains; and he was to ſay, I have no chains on at all; you would think that man's brains turned; and ſo are every man's that does not ſee himſelf to be in the chains of ſin and deceit. We are *to preach liberty to the captives, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord; ſound the jubilee trumpet, and tell them the year of releaſe is come*; that Jeſus can make them happy.

But, pray, if we are to preach, what are the creatures to do that ſee their need of this ſalvation? I will tell you; they are to believe. *He that believeth, and is baptized*, &c. The grand topics Chriſt's miniſters are to preach, are *repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* The men of the world

fancy they have believed already, and ſome of them lift up their heads and ſay, Thank God, we have believed ever ſince we were born; and in one ſenſe many people believe, but in what ſenſe? juſt as the devil believes; they believe, and ſtill continue devils in their carnal ſtate; that is, they aſſent to the goſpel, they aſſent to it as a thing that is credible. This is our ſchool definition of faith; and I believe there are thouſands that call themſelves Chriſtians, that don't believe a thouſandth part of what the devil does. The devil believes more than an Arian, for he does not believe Chriſt to be God; the devil ſays, *I know whom thou art, the Holy One of God.* The devil will riſe up in judgment againſt him. He believes more than a Socinian, who believes Jeſus Chriſt to be no more than an extraordinary man; and he believes more of Jeſus Chriſt than thouſands of profeſſors do, who are neither Arians or Socinians. There are a thouſand things in this book * that many people, if you come to cloſe-quarters with them, will ſay they do not believe, though they are aſhamed to own it. The furtheſt that they go, is to aſſent to the Creed, to the Lord's-prayer,

* Holding out his bible.

prayer, and Ten Commandments; and if a perſon can ſay theſe in their mother tongue, and have been baptized by the prieſt, and confirmed by the biſhop, and go to church once a week, and now and then on holidays, they think they are not only believers, but ſtrong believers. I am not againſt going to church, nor againſt the Creed, the Lord's-prayer, and the Commandments; I love and honour them, and I pray God we may always have them; and I would not have our liturgy or articles departed from for ten thouſand worlds. Many would have them altered, becauſe there are ſome faults in them; but if our modern people were to alter them, they would make them ten thouſand times worſe than they are. But believing is ſomething more; it is a coming to Jeſus Chriſt, receiving Jeſus, rolling ourſelves on Jeſus; it is a truſting in the Lord Jeſus. I do not know any one ſingle thing more variouſly expreſſed in the ſcriptures than believing; why? becauſe it is the marrow of the goſpel. Without faith we cannot be juſtified, either in our perſons or performances; and therefore the Holy Ghoſt has variouſly expreſſed it, to let us ſee the importance of the point. It is expreſſed by a coming, truſt-

ing, receiving, and relying, (all which amounts to the ſame thing) under a felt conviction that we are loſt, undone, condemned without him: for, as a good old Puritan obſerves, Chriſt is beholden to none of us for our hearts; we never ſhould come to Jeſus Chriſt, the ſinner's laſt ſhift, till we feel we cannot do without him. We are like the woman with the bloody iſſue; ſhe ſpent a great deal of money upon phyſicians; if ſhe had had the ſum of one half-guinea more, till that was gone ſhe never would have come to Chriſt; but having ſpent all, and then hearing that Jeſus was to come that way, a ſenſe of her need, a feeling ſenſe of her impotence, and inſufficiency of all other applications, made her come to Chriſt; ſaying in her heart, *If I could but touch the hem of his garment I ſhould be whole*; *Jeſus, the ſon of David, would have mercy on me*; or words to that purpoſe. She did not go about and ſay, pray lend me a common-prayer book; it was not in print then. Where muſt ſhe borrow one? her heart, touched by God, was the beſt common-prayer; and a few words, uttered from a ſenſe of her weakneſs and miſery, was more rhetoric, was more muſic in the ears of God, than an extempore

prayer

prayer by a gifted man, admiring himſelf for an hour and half. As a perſon told me but yeſterday, of a poor outlandiſh Papiſt that was condemned to die, held out for a long while; he would not ſpeak to a Proteſtant miniſter, but a night or two before he ſuffered, comes out to him, and ſays, *Me now ſee the neceſſity of a greater abſolution than a prieſt can give me*; and then, in his broken language, cries out, *Dear Lord Jeſus, ſhow thy charity to thy poor ſinner!* There is language! there is rhetoric for you! and we ourſelves like ſuch language. You don't like fawning people that come into your room, and by their very manner of coming prove they are not ſincere; but a poor creature that comes to pour out two or three words you ſee is honeſt, you will not ſay to ſuch a one, Why do you come to me, and not ſpeak blank verſe? why do you come to me, and not ſpeak fine language? No; ſincerity is the thing; ſincerity is all in all. When we are once convinced of our need and helpleſsneſs, and of Jeſus's being a Redeemer, that is mighty and willing to ſave, a poor ſoul then throws himſelf upon this Jeſus, receives this Jeſus, ventures upon this Jeſus, believes the word, and by thus venturing on the promiſe,

miſe, receives from Jeſus the thing promiſed. *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* But then where there is true faith, that will, my dear hearers, be attended with what? why, with ſalvation. *He that believeth, and is baptized,* ſaith our Lord, *ſhall be ſaved:* ſaved from what? why, from every thing that he wants to be ſaved from, and receives every thing that God can give to compleat his whole ſalvation. What is it a poor ſinner wants to be ſaved from? O, ſin, ſin, the guilt of ſin. The firſt conviction brings the creatures to God by force; there are very few that are drawn by love intirely: and I ſeldom find any of thoſe that have been drawn by love, but have had dreadful conflicts afterwards: for either before or after converſion, our hearts muſt be plowed up, or we ſhall never be prepared for the kingdom of heaven.

Ye ſhall be ſaved from the painful guilt of ſin: what is that? why, the common-prayer book will tell you, in the communion office; *the remembrance of our ſins is grievous unto us, and the burden of them is intolerable.* There is methodiſtical language. Cranmer, Latimer, or Hooper, were, my brethren, what? why, they were Methodiſt preachers; and they uſed

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to preach in Paul's-Croſs, a pulpit ſaid to be made in the ſhape of a croſs, near St. Paul's church; and a ſalary given for that very purpoſe, I believe, to this day. No matter where we preach, ſo that ſinners feel Chriſt's power in delivering them from this, which certainly implies a conſciouſneſs of pardon. I don't think the poor creature that was reſpited the other day, would have believed it, had he not ſeen the king's warrant juſt before the others were carried out. Why, ſay they, here is his majeſty's pardon; he takes and receives it with joy, and is now freed from the gallows. And if perſons can give this credence to an earthly king, why cannot a believer have a ſenſe of the pardon of his ſins from God? If a perſon's reading this to me, telling me the king has pardoned me, has ſuch an effect, why may not God's word, backed by his Spirit, be brought home with ſuch power on my heart, that I may be aſſured God has pardoned me, as well as a criminal that his king has ſaved? If this is goſpel away with it, ſay ſome, who think we are not to be juſtified till we come to judgment. O bleſſed creatures! this is modern divinity! our reformers knew nothing about it. We are to be declared, if you pleaſe, juſtified,

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in the day of Jeſus Chriſt, who will pronounce it before all mankind. But, my brethren, we are to be married to Jeſus Chriſt in this world, and the marriage is to be declared in another; and I will inſiſt upon it, though I will not pretend to ſay that all that have not full aſſurance are not Chriſtians, yet I will ſay, that aſſurance is neceſſary for the well-being of a Chriſtian; the comfortable being, though not for his very exiſtence: and I will venture to ſay, that a ſoul was never brought to Chriſt, but what had ſome ground of aſſurance of pardon; tho', for want of knowing better, he put it by, and did not know the gift of God when it came. But, my brethren, *we ſhall be ſaved from all our ſins.* Here is *glad tidings of great joy* now come: ſatan may hear that; and any of you here that are coming into the Chapel as you paſs along. I am glad to ſee poor creatures come, that I may tell them, *God is love.* Believers, you ſhall be ſaved from all your ſins, every one of them; they ſhall all be blotted out. Generally, when perſons are convinced, the devil preaches deſpair; ſome great ſin lies upon them; and, ſays the poor ſinner, I ſhall be ſaved from all but that; had I not been guilty of ſuch a crime I might have hope, but I am

I am guilty of ſuch a ſin, which is ſo awful, with ſuch dreadful aggravations, I am afraid I ſhall never be pardoned. But, my dear ſouls, Chriſt is love; and when he loves to forgive, he forgives like a God; *I will blot out your iniquities, tranſgreſſions, and ſins. Come now,* ſaith the Lord, *let us reaſon together; though your ſins are as ſcarlet, yet they ſhall be as white as ſnow.* I am ſo far from being unwilling to ſave or pardon, that the angels, every time the goſpel is preached, are ready to tune their harps, and long to ſing an anthem to ſome poor ſinner's converſion.

They ſhall be ſaved from the power of ſin. Don't you remember that when Joſhua was going on with his conqueſts, that there were ſome kings in a cave; and when he returned, he ordered them to bring the kings out for God's people to tread upon them. When I read that paſſage, I uſed to think theſe kings were like our corruptions hid in the cave of our hearts, and the ſtone of unbelief rolled to keep them in: but when we receive Chriſt by faith, and have pardon in him, our great Joſhua takes away the ſtone, and ſays, *bring out theſe kings,* theſe corruptions, *that have reigned over my people, and by faith let*

them tread on the necks of them. Our great Master, when he gave the command in the text, says, *these signs shall follow them that believe, in my name they shall cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them.* These were things peculiar, in one sense, to the apostles; but in the power of faith, and as brought home to every believer, he casts out deviliſh lusts; and if they had drank any deadly thing, as God knows we have, they may do by them as Paul did by the viper, through the power of faith cast them off, and by this means prove that Christ is God.

This is, my dear hearers, a present salvation. The wickedest wretch in the world will cry, I hope to be saved, though they have no notion of being saved but after their death; as a woman in Virginia told me once, when I said she must be born again; I believe you, sir, but that must be after I am dead. And by peoples living as they do, one would suppose that they think they are not to be saved till they die, because they live so. But as I have told you, I tell you again, Christ's salvation is a great salvation; and all that Christ

Chriſt does for his people on earth, is but an earneſt of good things to come, an anticipation of what he is to do for them in heaven. Our Lord ſays, *the kingdom of God is within you*; *the kingdom is come nigh unto you.* You muſt not only believe on Chriſt, but believe in him: we are not only to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, but we are to be baptized into the nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; this is the baptiſm of the Spirit, and this is that ſalvation which God grant we may all partake of.

We are to be ſaved, my brethren, from what? why, from the fear of death. *He came to deliver them who, through the fear of death, were all their life time ſubject to bondage.* What are there no children of God but thoſe that have full aſſurance? you never heard me ſay ſo; yet I am apt to ſpeak a little faſt, but at the ſame time I would chuſe not to ſpeak ſo faſt as to ſpeak contrary to the word of God. There are a great many good ſouls, that at times may doubt of the reality of this work upon their ſouls: a relaxed habit of body, a nervous diſorder, you may ſay what you pleaſe, will make a weak child of God doubt of what God has done in them, and that hurts the

mind as it has ſuch a cloſe connection with the body; but then a believer is low: God's people are low perſons: as the greateſt genuiſſes are moſt liable to lowneſs of ſpirit, for the ſcabbard is not ſtrong enough for the ſword, and perſons that talk much muſt wear out in time; but this I ſtand to, it is our privilege to live above the fears of death. We do not live up to our dignity till every day we are waiting for the coming of our Lord from heaven; and I am perſuaded of this, though I believe there may be ſome exceptions, that the reaſon why we do not live more above the fear of death is, becauſe we keep in ſo much with theſe naſty earthly things. You may have the beſt eyes in the world, and only put your hands before them, you will find the ſun hid from you; and ſo you may have a large fire, but throw ſome earth upon the fire that is in your parlour, or drawing rooms, and you will find the fire damped. And how can people have much of God or heaven, when they have ſo much of the earth in their hearts? It is our privilege to live above the fear of death, though we are not to be ſaved from dying; and I am ſure a believer would not be ſaved from dying for a million of worlds; it would be death to

him

him not to die; but a ſoul touched with the love of God, even in ſickneſs, in the midſt of a burning fever, in the midſt of a fire that will burn a thouſand bodies up, convulſed with tortures and pains in every limb; a believer is enabled ſometimes to ſay, *O my God, O my God, thou art love; I am ready to come to thee in the midſt of all.* Bleſſed be God, I need not go far for example; yonder, under the gallery, lies the remains, the carcaſe of a dear ſaint, who was for twenty-five days together burned with a fever, enough to ſcorch any creature up; yet, one filled with love and power divine, bleſſed the Lord Jeſus; though ſhe cried out, If I was not ſupported, the agony of my body would make me impatient; yet never ſaid a murmuring word, but in the midſt of all cried out to thoſe about her, *God is love! O my joys! O the comforts that I feel!* and in her very laſt moments cried out, *I am a coming; dear Lord, I am a coming;* and ſo ſweetly ſlept in Jeſus. If this is enthuſiaſm, God give us a good ſhare of it when we come to die! Theſe are dying and yet living witneſſes that *God is love!* She was in raptures when Mr. Sheppard went to viſit her: ſhe deſired me to tell you, that *God is love:* deſired

ſired me to tell you in the Chapel pulpit, that ſhe was called about four years ago. I think Mr. Lee was the inſtrument of her converſion. Now her body is to be put to bed at noon; but her ſoul is crying, O the joys! the joys! the joys! of being ſaved by a bleſſed Emanuel! Now will any one dare to deny this evidence? Do you ſee worldly people work themſelves up into that frame when they die? Viſit them when they are near death: ah dear! they are in the vapours; they are ſo afraid of dying, that the doctor will not ſuffer us to come near them; no, not common clergymen, for fear we ſhould damp their ſpirits: till they find they are juſt gone, and then they give us leave to ſay the farewel prayer to them: but they that are born from above, that are made new creatures in Chriſt, feel ſomething that ſmiles upon them in death. She told them, *ſhe believed God would let her go over Jordan dry ſhod*; that was her expreſſion. If this is ſalvation on earth, what muſt it be in heaven? If in the midſt of the tortures of a burning fever a raptured ſoul can cry, O the joys! O the comforts! Lord, I am coming! I am coming! what muſt that be when encloſed in a Redeemer's arms? in order to which, the glorious angels

angels ſtand at the top of the ladder to take a poor wearied pilgrim home. Lord, give us not only ſuch a frame when we are dying, but while we are living; for if it is comfortable to die in ſuch a frame, why not to live in it? to live in heaven on earth. O, ſay you, I thank God I walk by faith; I have got the promiſe. Well, thank God you have the promiſe; but with the promiſe, learn to walk by that *faith which is the evidence of things not ſeen*, which brings God down, brings heaven near, and gives the ſoul a heart-felt experience, that *God is love.* Here is a ſalvation worthy of a God! here is a ſalvation worthy of the Mediator's blood! for this he groaned, for this he bled, for this he died, for this he aroſe, for this he aſcended, for this he ſent the Holy Ghoſt, and for this purpoſe he now ſends him into the hearts of his people.

My brethren, what ſay you to this? I hope it is enough to make you cry out, *Lord, let my latter end be like hers.* This may comfort you that are mourners about her corpſe, this may comfort a fond huſband, whoſe beloved is now taken away by a ſtroke. What a mercy is it, ſir, that you was inſtrumental to bring her under the word? ſhe was once averſe

to

to coming here: *what, leave my pariſh church!* ſaid ſhe; *what, go to a conventicle, to a tabernacle of Methodiſts!* he adviſed her again and again to come: at laſt, one day as they were going to St. Giles's, ſhe ſays, Well, come put up your walking-ſtick, if it falls towards St. Giles's I will go there; if to the Chapel, I will go there; the ſtick fell towards the Chapel, ſhe came, and was converted to God. O with what joy muſt her huſband meet her again in the kingdom of heaven! and O happy day, in which ſhe was encouraged to ſeek after God. Laſt week, another was buried in the like circumſtances; and, bleſſed be God, in yonder burying-ground are the remains of many precious ſouls, that in the day of judgment will let the world know whether this Chapel was built for God or not.

O what an awful word is that in the latter clauſe of the text, *he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* Pauſe,—I will give you time to think a little; if you would have Chriſt as good as his word of promiſe, remember he will be as good as his word of threatning. You hear the neceſſity of preaching the goſpel, becauſe upon believing or non-believing, our ſalvation or damnation will turn. What will you laugh at the miniſter that cries out, Lord help

you

you to come; come, come, do you think that we have nothing elſe to ſay, and are at a loſs for words, when we cry come, come, come, to fill up our ſermons? no, it is part of our commiſſion, it is one great part. And, my fellow-ſinners, we are come to tell you, that our Maſter has a two-edged ſword as well as a golden ſcepter; and if you will not come under the ſound of the word, and do not feel the converting power of it, you muſt feel the confounding weight of it. I repeat it again to you, *he that believeth not ſhall be damned*; the very word is terrible, God grant you may never know how terrible it is. You are condemned already; he that believeth not is ſo, *John* iii. 18. why? *becauſe he hath not believed on the name of the Son of God.* It is not his being a whore-monger or adulterer that will damn him, but his unbelief is the damning ſin; for this he will be condemned; for ever baniſhed from the preſence of the ever-bleſſed God: and how will you rave, how will you tear, and how will you wring your hands, when you ſee your relations, your friends, thoſe whom you deſpiſed, and were glad they were dead out of your way, *ſee them in Abraham's boſom, and yourſelves lifting up your eyes in torment!* O

my dear hearers, do let me plead, let me intreat you; if that would do, I would down on my knees; if that would do, I would come down from the pulpit, I would hang on your necks, I would not let you go, I would offer myſelf to be trodden under your feet; I have known what it is to be trodden under the foot of men thirty years ago, and I am of the ſame temper ſtill: uſe me as you will, I am a poor ſinner; and if I was to be killed a thouſand ways, I ſuffer no more than my reward as an unprofitable ſervant of God: but don't trample the dear Jeſus under foot; what has he done to you? was it any harm to leave his father's boſom, come down and die, and plead for ſinners? See him yonder hang on the tree! behold him with his arm ſtretched out! ſee him all of a bloody gore, and in his laſt agony preaching love! Would you give him a freſh ſtab? Are there any of you here that think the ſword did not pierce him enough; that they did not knock the briers and thorns into his head deep enough? and will you give him the other flaſh, the other thorns? and will you pierce him afreſh, and go away without believing he is love? I cannot help it; I am free from the blood of you all. Oh that you

may

may not damn your own ſouls! Don't be murderers; nor, like Eſau, *ſell your birthright for a meſs of pottage.* God convince you; God convert you; God help thoſe that never believed to believe; God help thoſe that have believed to believe more; that they may experience more and more this ſalvation, till faith is turned into viſion, and hope into fruition; till we have all, with yonder ſaint, and all that have gone before us, experienced compleat ſalvation in the kingdom of heaven: even ſo, Lord Jeſus. Amen and Amen.

SERMON V.

Repentance and Converſion.

Acts iii. ver. 19.

Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out, when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord.

WHAT a pity is it that modern preachers attend no more to the method thoſe took who were firſt inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, in preaching Jeſus Chriſt! the ſucceſs they were honoured with, gave a ſanction to their manner of preaching, and the divine authority of their diſcourſes, and energy of their elocution, one would think, ſhould have more weight with thoſe that are called to diſpenſe the goſpel, than all modern ſchemes whatever. If this was the caſe, miniſters would then learn firſt to ſow, and then to reap; they would endeavour to plow up the

the fallow ground, and thereby prepare the people for God's raining down bleſſings upon them. Thus Peter preached when under a divine influence, as I mentioned laſt Wedneſday night: he charged the audience home, though many of them were learned and high and great, with having been the murderers of the Son of God. No doubt but the charge entered deep into their conſcience, and that faithful monitor beginning to give them a proper ſenſe of themſelves, the apoſtle lets them know that great as their ſin was, it was not unpardonable; that though they had been concerned in the horrid crime of murdering the Lord of Life, notwithſtanding they had thereby incurred the penalty of eternal death, yet there was a mercy for them, the way to which he points out in the text; *Repent ye therefore*, ſays he, *and be converted*, and adds, *that your ſins may be blotted out*. Though they are but few words, they are weighty; a ſhort ſentence this, but ſweet: may God make it a bleſſed ſweetneſs to every one of your hearts!

But muſt we preach converſion to a profeſſing people? Some of you, perhaps, are ready to ſay, go to America; go among the ſavages and preach repentance and converſion there;

or,

or, if you muſt be a field-preacher, go to the highways and hedges; go to the colliers; go ramble up and down, as you uſed to do, preach converſion to the drunkards: would to God my commiſſion might be renewed, that I might have ſtrength and ſpirit to take the advice!

Poſſibly others will ſay, do not preach it to us; pray who are you? I anſwer, one ſent to call you to repentance; and although I might, yet I will not come ſo cloſe to you at preſent, as to inquire in my turn, who are you? yet permit me to pray, that while I am preaching God's Spirit may find you out; and not only let you know who you are, but what you are; and then you will not be eaſy with yourſelves, nor angry with a miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt for preaching converſion to your ſouls.

Repentance and converſion are nearly the ſame. The expreſſion in the text is complex, and ſeems to include both what goes before and follows *turning to God:* and if the Lord is pleaſed to honour me ſo far to night to be uſeful to ſinners, as well as ſaints, I will endeavour to ſhew you,

Firſt, what it is not to be converted: ſecondly, what it is to be truly converted: thirdly,

ly, offer ſome motives why you ſhould repent and be converted: and, fourthly, anſwer ſome objections that have been made againſt perſons repenting and being converted; and may God ſo bleſs my preaching, and your hearing, that every one may go away and ſay, Lord, convert me more and more.

Firſt, I ſhall endeavour to ſhow you what it is not to be converted; for I do verily believe there are thouſands, and ten thouſands, that think themſelves converted, and yet at the ſame time, if you come and examine them, they know not ſo much as ſpeculatively what real converſion is: the general notion many have of it is, a perſon's being a convert from the church of Rome to the church of England. There is a particular office in the large prayer book, to be uſed when any one publicly renounces popery in the great congregation. When this is done, that prayer read, and the perſon ſaid Amen to the collects upon the occaſion, every body wiſhes him joy, and thanks God he is converted; whereas, if this is all, he is as much unconverted to God as ever; he has in words renounced popery, but never took leave of the ſins of his heart. Well, after this he looks into the church, and does

not

not like that white thing called a ſurplice; he looks, and thinks there are ſome rags of the whore of Babylon left ſtill: now, ſays he, I will be converted; how? I will turn Diſſenter: ſo after he is converted from the church of Rome to the church of England, he goes to the diſſenting church: may be, curioſity may bring him to the Methodiſts, thoſe monſtrous troubleſome creatures, and, perhaps, he may then be converted a third time, like their preaching, like their ſinging; O dear, I muſt have a Tabernacle-ticket, I muſt have a Pſalm-book, I will come as often as there is preaching, or at leaſt as often as I can; and there he ſits down, and becomes an outſide converted Methodiſt, as demure as poſſible.: this is going a prodigious way, and yet all this is converſion from one party only to another. If the miniſter gives a rub or two he will take miff perhaps, and be converted to ſome other perſuaſion, and all the while Jeſus Chriſt is left unthought of; but this is converſion only from party to party, not real, and that which will bring a ſoul to heaven. Poſſibly, a perſon may go further, and be converted from one ſet of principles to another; he may, for inſtance, be born an Arminian, which all men naturally

naturally are; and one reaſon why I think Calviniſm right is, becauſe proud nature will not ſtoop to be ſaved by grace. You that are brought up in an orthodox belief, under an orthodox miniſtry, cannot eaſily make an allowance for thouſands that have nothing ringing in their ears but Arminianiſm; you have ſuck'd in orthodoxy with your mother's milk, and that makes ſo many ſour and ſevere profeſſors. I knew a rigid man that would beat Chriſtianity into his wife; and ſo many beat people with their bibles, that they are likely, by their bitter proceeding, to hinder them from attending to the means God has deſigned for converſion. What is this but being converted from one ſet of principles to another? and I may be very zealous for them, without being transformed by them into the image of God. But ſome go further, they think they are converted becauſe they are reformed: they ſay, *a reformed rake makes a good huſband*, but I think a renewed rake will make a better. Reformation is not renovation: I may have the outſide of the platter waſhed; I may be turned from prophaneneſs to a regard for morality; and becauſe I do not ſwear, nor go to the play as I uſed to do; have left off cards,

and perhaps put on a plain dreſs; and ſo believe, or rather fancy, that I am converted; yet the old man remains unmortified, and the heart is unrenewed ſtill. Comparing myſelf with what I once was, and looking on my companions with diſdain, I may there ſtick faſter in ſelf, and get into a worſe and more dangerous ſtate than I was before. If any of you think me too ſevere, remember you are the perſon I mean; for you think me ſo only becauſe I touch your caſe. The drunkards and ſabbath-breakers, curſers and ſwearers, ſay to us, you can never preach but you preach againſt us: as a good man once replied to a perſon, who complained againſt us miniſters for this preaching; I will put you in a way, ſaid he, that we ſhall never preach againſt you; how is that? why, leave off curſing and ſwearing, &c. then your conſciences will be clear, and the miniſter will look over your heads: happy they that are convinced of it! You have not heard me, I hope, ſpeak a word againſt reformation; you have not heard me ſpeak a word againſt being converted from the church of Rome; againſt being converted to the church of England; or, againſt being good: no; all theſe are right in their place; but all

theſe

theſe converſions you may have, and yet never be truly converted at all. What is converſion then? I will not keep you longer in ſuſpenſe, my brethren: man muſt be a new creature, and converted from his own righteouſneſs to the righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; conviction will always preceed ſpiritual converſion; and therefore the Proteſtant divines make this diſtinction, you may be convinced and not converted, but you cannot be converted without being convinced; and if we are truly converted, we ſhall not only be turned and converted from ſinful ſelf, but we ſhall be converted from righteous ſelf; that is the devil of devils: for righteous ſelf can run and hide itſelf in its own doings, which is the reaſon ſelf-righteous people are ſo angry with goſpel preachers; there are no ſuch enemies to the goſpel as theſe: *there were Jews who truſted in themſelves that they were righteous,* that ſet all in an uproar, and raiſed the mob on the apoſtles. Our Lord denounced dreadful woes againſt the ſelf-righteous Phariſees: ſo miniſters muſt cut and hack them, and not ſpare; but ſay wo, wo, wo to all thoſe that will not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt! I could almoſt ſay, this is the laſt ſtroke the

Lord Jeſus gave Paul, I mean in turning him to real Chriſtianity; for having given him a blow as a perſecutor and injurious, he then brought him out of himſelf by revealing his perſon and office as a Saviour. *I am Jeſus.*—Hence ſays the apoſtle, *I count all things but loſs—that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him; not having my own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt; the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.* You hear him not only ſpeak of himſelf as injurious, as a blaſphemer, but alſo as a Phariſee; and in vain we may talk of being converted till we are brought out of ourſelves; to come as poor loſt, undone ſinners, to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; to be waſhed in his blood; to be cloathed in his glorious imputed righteouſneſs: the conſequence of this imputation, or application of a Mediator's righteouſneſs to the ſoul, will be a converſion from ſin to holineſs. I am almoſt tempted to ſay, it is perverſeneſs in people to preach againſt the doctrine of imputed righteouſneſs, becauſe they love holineſs, and charge the Calviniſts with being enemies to it: how can they be charged with being enemies to Sanctification, who ſo ſtrenuouſly inſiſt on its being the genuine

nuine fruit, and unqueſtionable proof of the imputation of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and application of it by the Spirit of grace? They that are truly converted to Jeſus, and are juſtified by faith in the Son of God, will take care to evidence their converſion, not only by the having grace implanted in their hearts, but by that grace diffuſing itſelf through every faculty of the ſoul, and making a univerſal change in the whole man. I am preaching from a bible that ſaith, *He that is in Chriſt is a new creature, old things*, not *will* be but, *are paſſed away, all things*, not only *will* but, *are become new.* As a child when born has all the ſeveral parts of a man, it will have no more limbs than it has now, if it lives to fourſcore years and ten; ſo when a perſon is converted to God, there are all the features of the new creature and growth, till he becomes a young man and a father in Chriſt; till he becomes ripe in grace, and God tranſlates him to glory. Any thing ſhort of this is but the ſhadow inſtead of the ſubſtance; and however perſons may charge us with being enthuſiaſts, yet we need not be moved either to anger or ſorrow, ſince St. Paul ſays, *I travel in birth till Chriſt be formed in your hearts.*

The

The author of this converſion is the Holy Ghoſt: it is not their own free will; it is not moral ſwaſion; nothing ſhort of the influence of the Spirit of the living God can effect this change in our hearts; therefore we are ſaid to *be born again, born of God, of the Spirit, not of water only, but of the Holy Ghoſt; that which is born of the fleſh is fleſh, but that which is born of the Spirit is ſpirit:* and tho' there is and will be a conteſt between theſe two oppoſites, fleſh and ſpirit, yet if we are truly converted, the ſpirit will get the aſcendency; and though for a while nature and grace may ſtruggle in the womb of a converted ſoul, like Jacob and Eſau, yet the elder ſhall ſerve the younger, Jacob ſhall ſupplant and turn out Eſau, or at leaſt keep him under: God grant we may all thus prove that we are converted. This converſion, however it begins at home, will ſoon walk abroad; as the Virgin Mary was ſoon found out to be with child, ſo it will be ſoon found out whether Chriſt is formed in the heart. There will be new principles, new ways, new company, new works; there will be a thorough change in the heart and life; this is converſion: at firſt it begins with terror and legal ſorrow, afterwards it leads to joyfulneſs;

neſs; firſt we work for ſpiritual life, afterwards from it: firſt we are in bondage, afterwards we receive the Spirit of adoption to long and thirſt for God, becauſe he has been pleaſed to let us know that he will take us to heaven. Converſion means a being turned from hell to heaven, from the world to God. We have not ſo much as aſked a perſon to ſell his all, to leave his ſhop, to lay any thing at our feet: when we talk of being converted from the world, we mean being converted from the love of it: the heart once touched with the magnet of divine love, ever after turns to the pole. I think it is ſaid of a ſun-flower, though I queſtion whether it will always hold true, that it turns to the ſun; I am ſure it is true of the Redeemer's flowers that grow in his garden, they not only look to the ſun, but they find freſh life, warmth, and transforming influence from him who is their all in all. Here Chriſtianity appears in its glory; here the work done is worthy the Son of God. To be converted only to a party, is that worth Chriſt's coming from heaven to earth for; that we might have a ſet of principles without having them affect the heart? for to be baptized when young, or as ſome to come out of the water at

age,

age, and turn out as bad as ever, is a plain proof of the neceſſity of being baptized by the Holy Ghoſt.

What ſay you to this change, my dear ſouls? is it not god-like, is it not divine, is it not heaven brought down to the ſoul; have you felt it, have you experienced it? I begin to catechize you already, for I could ſpend a whole ſermon in ſpeaking of converſion; but I am afraid thoſe that ſit under the goſpel have more need of heat than light: would to God we had as much warmth in our hearts, as light in our underſtandings! But if there be any of you here that are not yet converted, upon what grounds do you hope for converſion? give me leave to ſay, that you ought to repent and be converted, for till then you never can, never will, never ſhall find true reſt for your ſouls. What wrong notions have people got of converſion! they think it is a wretched thing, and dread being converted; not knowing what it is, they think it is a frightful thing. I knew one ſometime ago that came to ſome Methodiſts; dear, ſays the perſon, you are chearful, I could be glad if I was a Methodiſt too, if there was a majority of them in the land: but God help us to go to heaven with the minority,

if

if the majority will not follow. But, my dear hearers, there is not a ſingle ſoul of you all that are ſatisfied in your ſtations: is not the language of your hearts when apprentices, we think we ſhall do very well when journeymen; when journeymen, that we ſhould do very well when maſters: when ſingle, that we ſhall do well when married; and to be ſure you think you ſhall do well when you keep a carriage. I have heard of one who began low; he firſt wanted a houſe, then, ſays he, I want two, then four, then ſix; and when he had them, he ſaid, I think I want nothing elſe; yes, ſays his friend, you will ſoon want another thing, that is, a hearſe and ſix to carry you to your grave; and that made him tremble. O if you are Chriſtians, if the Lord loves you, he will put a thorn in your fleſh. I have often thought of what a good man ſays in his Diary, the Lord put a thorn in my fleſh. Among politicians, when they find a man ambitious, they ſay, kick him up, that he may fall and break his neck: ſo it is in every condition; there is not one of you fifty years old, but have had many changes: have not you found thorns even on the roſe that ſmelt ſo ſweet, and thorns perhaps that pricked you ſo

cloſely, that you have forgot the ſcent of the roſe by it? and what is all this for, but to teach you that happineſs is only to be found in the Lord. If a ſoul is truly converted, there will be a battle, and an awful chaſm that will never be filled up but with the love of God; and therefore when we ſay, Repent and be converted, it is no more than ſaying, repent and be happy. Indeed we ſhall never be compleatly happy till we get to heaven. O that every man could ſee the good of every thing of a ſublunary nature drop off like leaves in autumn: God grant this may be known by every one of you.

If it is aſked, why you ſhould repent and be converted? I anſwer, becauſe elſe you can never be happy hereafter. What do you think heaven is? why, ſays the covetous man, I think it is a place full of gold; ſo you think to ſteal ſome of the gold, do you? Others would like heaven very well if there was a good gaming-table in heaven; if there was card-playing in heaven. I have heard of a lady that was ſo fond of gaming, that though ſhe had the pangs of death upon her, yet when in the midſt of her fits, or juſt coming out of one, inſtead of aſking after Jeſus, where he

was

was to be found, ſhe aſked, what is trumps? So the gameſter will aſk, where is the back-gammon table? where is the box? he will want to ſhake his ungodly hand in heaven; he will ſay, let us have a gaming-table in heaven, where, as he will find, he has loſt the game; that God has damned him without an intereſt in Chriſt. *Can two walk together unleſs they are agreed?* If you die and do not love God here, if you cannot love praying to God here, and cannot watch one hour, ſuppoſe you was to be ſtruck by death and be taken to heaven, there is no ſuch language and amuſement there, what would you do? Why, ſay you, theſe Methodiſts are preſumptuous people, they can tell us whether we are to go to heaven or no. Good Mr. Rogers, a Welſh Boanerges, preaching in the mountains, ſaid, Chriſt is heaven, if I worſhip God here, and do all to God, and for God, without any hopes of reward upon the earth. My dear brethren, the devils would never be troubled with ſuch a wretch in hell, he would ſet all hell in an uproar; if a true Methodiſt was to go to hell, the devil would ſay, turn that Methodiſt out, he is come to torment us: therefore, you muſt be converted if you will go to heaven. Dr. Scott

ſays, if a natural man was to be put into heaven, it would be ſuch a hell to him, that he would be glad to go to hell for ſhelter: angels they hate, God they hate; and as Adam was afraid to meet with God when he firſt fell from him, ſo his ſons hate God and flee away.

I mention one thing more, which is, that you muſt be converted, or be damned, and that is plain Engliſh, but not plainer than my Maſter made uſe of, *He that believeth not ſhall be damned.* I did not ſpeak that word ſtrong enough that ſays, *He that believeth not ſhall be damned*; that is the language of our Lord; and it is ſaid of one of the primitive preachers, that uſed to ſpeak the word damned ſo that it ſtruck all his auditory. We are afraid of ſpeaking the word damned for fear of offending ſuch and ſuch a one; at the ſame time they deſpiſe the miniſter for not being honeſt to his maſter. Some have ſaid, and ſtand to it, that hell is only a temporary puniſhment: Who told them ſo? A temporary puniſhment! nothing but a guilty conſcience. O go to Bedlam! Do aſk a child of God what he feels when his Lord is abſent? Aſk the ſpouſe what ſhe felt when ſhe cries, *Saw ye him whom my ſoul loveth?* Aſk a child of God when he is uſing this plaintive language,

language, *Why ſtandeſt thou afar off, O Lord?* and he will tell you, it is hell to my ſoul to be but one moment without the preſence of my beloved. And if his abſence for a quarter of an hour can ſcarce be bore by a child of God, what muſt that ſoul undergo that is commanded to depart from him for ever? and yet theſe very words were ſaid to thoſe that thought they bid fair for heaven; to theſe Jeſus ſays, *I know ye not.* God grant you may never know the meaning of theſe words by awful experience! Now, what ſay you? I could make a hundred heads more, but I chuſe to make as few as poſſible, that you may remember them. I ſay, converſion makes you happy hereafter, and without it you are damned for ever.

Are theſe things ſo? why then, my dear hearers, do you think there can be any objection raiſed againſt converſion, do you think there can be any argument raiſed againſt turning to God directly? is there any perſon here that will give himſelf time to conſider a moment that will not ſay, though you ſpeak in a rough, incoherent manner, yet there is ſome truth in what you ſay; I believe men ought to be converted, but the common ſaying is, I

don't

don't care to be converted yet; we think it is time enough to be converted. Is not this acting like the cardinal, when told he was elected pope, and deſired to come that night and have the honour of pope conferred on him; becauſe it was pretty late ſaid, it is not a work of darkneſs, I will put it off till the morning; before which they choſe another pope, and he loſt his triple crown. You may think to put it off till the morning, though before the morning you may be damned. Pray why will you not be converted now? if you was in priſon, and a perſon would take you out, you would chuſe to be let out to-night before morning, that you might ſleep the better; why will you not do that for your ſoul you would for your body? Well, I would be converted but I ſhall be laughed at: ſuppoſe you was to have it promiſed, you ſhould have a ten thouſand pound lottery ticket, but you muſt be laughed at all your life-time; there is none but would ſay, give me the ten thouſand pounds, and call me Methodiſt as long as I live: ſo if you loved God and your ſouls, you would ſay, give me God and call me what you will. You are afraid of being laughed at and nick-named, and ſkulk into this and that place, becauſe it does

does not ſtink ſo much of Methodiſm as this. Put your cockades in your hats, and let the world ſee that you are not aſhamed of God's badge: let the devil and his agents preach to you; they can proclaim their ſin like Sodom; they are not aſhamed of going to balls and aſſemblies, to parties of pleaſure, and ſubſcribing to horſe-races. Is the goſpel the glory of the land, and are you aſhamed of the goſpel? What think you, if you had given an hundred pounds to learn ſuch a trade, would you ſay, I ſhall never attain it! no, you will perſevere, and by giving diligence make an excellent mechanic, an admirable tradeſman; and do you think to go to heaven without ſome trouble? do you think the leopard can change his ſpots, the Ethiopian put his ſkin intirely off? can we have any thing to nouriſh our bodies without the labour of particular perſons? and therefore we are commanded *to work out our ſalvation with fear and trembling.* Remember our Redeemer *will not quench the ſmoaking flax, nor break the bruiſed reed; he will gently lead thoſe that are with young.* We are like poor ſwimmers; ſome people will put one foot in and cry oh! and then another, but a good ſwimmer plunges in at once, and

comes

comes out braced up: would to God we could do ſo, plunge into God at once, and God will bear up our ſouls indeed.

But ſay you, all in good time, I do not chuſe to be converted yet; why, what age are you now? I will come down to a pretty moderate age; ſuppoſe you are fourteen: and do not you think it time to be converted? and yet there are a great many here, I dare ſay, twenty years old, and not converted. Some are of opinion, that moſt people that are converted, are ſo before thirty. There was a young man buried laſt night at Tottenham Court but ſeventeen, an early monument of free grace! Are you forty, or fifty, is not that time? Is it time for the poor priſoners to be converted that are to be hanged tomorrow morning? if it is time for them, it is time for you, for you may be dead before them. There was a poor woman, but two or three days ago, that was damning and curſing moſt ſhockingly, now ſhe is a dead corpſe, was taken ſuddenly, and died away. God grant, that may not be the caſe with any of you; the only way to prevent it is, to be enabled to think that *now is an accepted time, that now is the day of ſalvation.* Let me look round,

round, and what do you ſuppoſe I was thinking? why, that it is a mercy we have not been in hell a thouſand times. How many are there in hell that uſed to ſay, Lord convert me, but not now? One of the good old Puritans ſays, Hell is paved with good intentions. Now can you blame me, can you blame the miniſters of Chriſt if this is the caſe, can you blame us for calling after you, for ſpending and being ſpent for your ſouls? it is eaſy for you to come to hear the goſpel, but you do not know what nights and days we have; what pangs we have in our hearts, and *how we travel in birth till Jeſus Chriſt be formed in your ſouls.* Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken, God help you, ſave, ſave, ſave *yourſelves from an untoward generation.* To-night ſomebody ſits up with the priſoners; if they find any of them aſleep, or no ſign of their being awake, they knock and call, and the keepers cry, awake! and I have heard that the preſent ordinary ſits up with them all the night before their execution: therefore, don't be angry with me if I knock at your doors, and cry, poor ſinners, awake! awake! and God help thee to take care thou doſt not ſleep in an unconverted ſtate to-night. The court

is juſt ſitting, the executioner ſtands ready, and before to-morrow, long before to-morrow, Jeſus may ſay of ſome of you, *Bind them hand and foot.* The priſoners to-morrow will have their hands tied behind them, their thumb-ſtrings muſt be put on, and their fetters knocked off; they muſt be tied faſt to the cart, the cap put over their faces, and the dreadful ſignal given; if you were their relations would not you weep? don't be angry then with a poor miniſter for weeping over them that will not weep for themſelves. If you laugh at me, I know Jeſus ſmiles. I cannot force a cry when I will; the Lord Jeſus Chriſt be praiſed, *I am free from the blood of you all:* if you are damned for want of converſion, remember you are not damned for want of warning. Thouſands that have no goſpel preached to them, may ſay, Lord, we never heard what converſion is; but you are goſpel-proof; and if there is any deeper place in hell than other, God will order a goſpel deſpiſing-Methodiſt to be put in there. You will have dreadful torments; to whom ſo much is given, much will be required. How dreadful to have miniſter after miniſter, preacher after preacher, ſay, *Lord God, I preached but they would not hear.* Think of this, profeſſors, and God make you poſſeſſors! You

You that do poſſeſs a little, and are really converted, God convert you and me every hour in the day; for there is not a believer in the world, but has got ſomething in him that he ſhould be converted from; the pulling down of the old houſe, and building up the new one, will be a work till death. Do not think I am ſpeaking to the unconverted only, but to you that are converted. God convert you from lying a-bed in the morning; God convert you from your conformity to the world; God convert you from lukewarmneſs; God convert us from ten thouſand things which our own hearts muſt ſay we want to be converted from; then you will have the Spirit of the living God. Do not get into a curſed Antinomian way of thinking, and ſay, I thank God, I have the root of the matter in me: I thank God, that I was converted twenty or thirty years ago; and once in Chriſt always in Chriſt; and though I can go to a public-houſe and play at cards, or the like, yet, I bleſs God, I am converted. Whether you was converted formerly or not, you are perverted now; and may God convert you all to cloſe Chriſtianity with God!

You that are old profeſſors, don't draw young ones back from God, by ſaying, ah! you will come down from the mount by and by; you will not always be ſo hot; and inſtead of encouraging poor ſouls, you will pull them down, becauſe you have left your firſt love: would you have Jeſus Chriſt catch you napping, with your lamps untrimmed?

O ye ſervants of the moſt high God, if any of you are here to-night, though I am the chief of ſinners, and the leaſt of all ſaints, ſuffer the word of exhortation. I am ſure I preach feelingly now; God knows I ſeldom ſleep after three in the morning; I pray every morning, Lord, convert me, and make me more a new creature to day. I know I want to be converted from a thouſand things, and from ten thouſand more: Lord God, confirm me; Lord God, revive his work.

You young people, I charge you to conſider; God help you to repent and be converted, who woo's and invites you. You middle-aged people, O that you would repent and be converted. You old grey-headed people, Lord make you repent and be converted, that you may thereby prove that your ſins are blotted out. O I could preach till I

preached

preached myſelf dead; I could be glad to preach myſelf dead, if God would convert you! O God bleſs his work on you, that you may bloſſom and bring forth fruits unto God. Amen and Amen.

SERMON

SERMON VI.

Glorifying God in the Fire; or, the right Improvement of Affliction.

ISAIAH xxiv. ver. 15.

Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires.

YOU have oft, my dear hearers, let me tell you, met with affliction; and I believe you may perſuade yourſelves affliction is at hand, which makes ſuch deep impreſſions, when ſent and bleſſed by heaven, as to thaw the very heart. Faith, like ſome glaſſes to view objects near us, ſets them in ſo ſtrong a light, that we cannot help being affected with the weight of the impreſſion; hence the prophets, when under a divine impulſe, foreſaw things at a diſtance; ſpoke and wrote of them as though actually preſent. *They ſung both of judgment and mercy*, in ſuch ſtrong and perſuaſive ſtrains, as to convince of the reality of their exiſtence. Iſaiah, who had a courtly

courtly education, being probably brother to a king, ſeems to excel in this kind of ſpeaking; a perſon of good natural, as well as acquired abilities, which being tempered by the Holy Ghoſt, made him a kind of an angel of an orator, of a writer, and a prophet. When he penned this chapter, he probably foreſaw the dreadful calamities coming on the land; and ſo ſtrong was his perſuaſion, that he writes as though he ſaw the things taking place. *Behold*, ſays he, *the Lord maketh the earth empty, maketh it waſte, and turneth it upſide down, and ſcattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.* How much is expreſſed in a few words! *As with the people ſo with the prieſts*, who perhaps, on account of their ſituation in the church, might think they ſhould be exempted; but if the prieſts ſin with the people, they ſhall be puniſhed with the people. *As with the ſervant, ſo with his maſter; as with the maid, ſo with her miſtreſs; as with the buyer, ſo with the ſeller; as with the lender, ſo with the borrower; as with the taker of uſury, ſo with the giver of uſury to him.* So you ſee that the viſitation would be univerſal; that it ſhould fall on all ſorts of people. Ver. 3. *The land ſhall be utterly emptied and utterly ſpoiled;*

ſpoiled; probably, by a foreign foe taking advantage of the domeſtic confuſions, who ſhall deſtroy the fruits of the earth. Some may think, perhaps, that this will never come to paſs; but, ſaith Iſaiah, *the Lord hath ſpoken it.* It pleaſed God the nation ſhould be devoted to a dreadful ſtroke: *The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languiſheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languiſh,* whoſe crimes, one would think, would never be brought to puniſhment, on account of the eminence of their ſtations; they thought themſelves out of danger, but they ſhall feel the common ſcourge: *For the earth alſo,* as in the fifth verſe, *is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; becauſe they have tranſgreſſed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlaſting covenant.* God did not ſtrike without a cauſe; for the earth groaned, as it were, under the ſins of the inhabitants for their neglect of religion, for diſowning God, for turning their back on the Moſt High. *Therefore hath the curſe devoured the earth,* (ver. 6.) *and they that dwell therein are deſolate.* He does not ſay it ſhall be, but it is done. *The inhabitants of the earth are burned,* with dreadful fire of conſuming vengeance, *and few men left.*

All

All the merry hearted, that minded nothing but jollity and mirth, even *they do ſigh. The joy of the harp ceaſeth; they ſhall not drink wine with a ſong, ſtrong drink ſhall be bitter to them that drink it. The* very great *city*, the metropolis, *is broken down; every houſe is ſhut up, becauſe deſolation is left in it.* The inhabitants forſake it, their houſes are left, ſhut up, becauſe they are afraid ſome foreign power ſhould come to their deſtruction. *There is a crying for wine in the ſtreets, all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone:* no plays, no routs, no aſſemblies now; *the city is left deſolate*; the court not excepted; deſolation herſelf takes her ſeat and ravages there. *The earth ſhall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and ſhall be removed like a cottage; and the tranſgreſſions thereof ſhall be heavy upon it, and it ſhall fall, and not riſe again.* What an amazing ſcene is this! enough to fill us with horror even at this diſtance of time and place! But is there no way for eſcape? is there no light breaking through this dark ſhade? bleſſed be God, there is; look at ver. 13, you will find in the midſt of dangers, God ſhall lend his preſence. *When thus it ſhall be*, pray mind that, *in the midſt of the land among the people*,

what follows? *there ſhall be as the ſhaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done*; there ſhall be a few godly people left, let the devil do what he will; but there will be but few. You know, after the people have gathered the fruits from the tree, they ſhake it to bring down the remainder; and after reaping of corn there are a few gleanings, ſo the Lord ſays, it ſhall deſtroy moſt people, yet in ſo diſcriminating a way, that God's people ſhould be ſafe.

I cannot well recollect how archbiſhop Uſher applies this; but this I am ſure he ſays, there will certainly come a time when the world will undergo the greateſt ſcourge that ever it felt, which ſhall chiefly fall on the outward-court worſhippers, upon thoſe that know not God; God will take particular care of ſecuring his own; and when the wicked are all deſtroyed, the Chriſtians ſhall go to a little city, and there ſhall dwell in Goſhen, till God ſhall call home his ancient people the Jews. So God will take care of his people, that they ſhall be ſafe: pray look to ver. 14, *they ſhall lift up their voice*; what, to cry? no, they have done with prayers, they have done with faſting; they have lifted up their voice,

voice, and often exhorted their neighbours to *flee from the wrath to come*; but now they ſhall ſing for the majeſty of God; when all people are mourning, they ſhall rejoice. And at the great day, when Jeſus Chriſt pronounces the wicked damned, *depart ye curſed*, God's people will then lift up their voices with majeſty and triumph; which made a good man ſay to his ſon, juſt before he died, I am afraid I ſhall never ſee thee any more till I hear Jeſus Chriſt ſay unto thee, *depart thou curſed!* Some years ago, being preſent at the trial of a very vile perſon at the Old-Bailey, and being in ſuſpenſe whether he would be brought in guilty or no, when the word *guilty* came, and the people heard of it, they did in effect give an eclat to it; whether juſt or unjuſt, I thought it was an emblem of that awful day, when all the angels of God, and his ſaints, ſhall ſay Amen; when God conſigns the wicked to hell: God grant this may not be any of your caſe. Says the prophet, *they ſhall cry aloud from the ſea*; ſome of them may be on the other ſide of the water, gone abroad while others ſtay at home; but whether at home or abroad, though they have been baniſhed by perſecution, though they have been driven to

the other ſide of the water, which has been the caſe of many perſons before now, *yet they ſhall cry aloud*; they ſhall find the ſame God abroad as they did at home. A judge ſaid to a good old Chriſtian that was perſecuted in Charles II.'s time, I will baniſh you to America; ſays ſhe, Very well, you cannot ſend me out of my Father's country. They ſhall cry aloud from the ſea, *wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires*; if this is the caſe, the prophet draws the inference; what muſt they do under theſe circumſtances; why, they muſt ſtudy how to glorify God in the fires, not how to eſcape or run away from him, but how to glorify him; *wherefore*, ſaith he, *glorify me*, glorify me the Lord, *in the fires*; not the fire, in the ſingular number, but in the plural number, fires. We are, my brethren, very much miſtaken, if we think we have but one fire to go through.

The words imply, in order to bring them home to ourſelves, that all God's people muſt be put into the fires. Fire ſometimes denotes the love of God, ſometimes the work of the Holy Ghoſt, and very often it denotes affliction; therefore, the apoſtle talks of a *fiery trial*; and let it be of whatever kind it will, let

let it be upon mind, body, or eſtate; whether it comes from friend or foe, or whether it comes immediately from the hand of God himſelf upon the ſoul, it may well be compared to fire, for you all know that fire ſcorches; God expects when he ſtrikes, that we ſhould feel. Of all things in the world to be avoided, a ſtony heart, or a ſtupidity under God's afflicting hand, is moſt to be deprecated. I ſuppoſe you have heard of the Stoics *, with whom the apoſtle Paul diſputed in the place of public traffic in Athens. Paul did not take a walk to Change to talk on trade, he went to talk about Jeſus Chriſt, if he could meet with one to talk with: I wiſh the clergy took no other walks but theſe. Every thing is to be tried by fire; we may talk what we pleaſe, but we ſhall never know what metal we are made of, till God puts us into the fire. It is very eaſy talking what we can bear, and what we can do, but let God lay his hand on us, and we ſhall ſee what we are. We are apt to find fault, and be peeviſh with our friends and relations under ſuch circumſtances; they are apt to ſay, you

* They taught that a wiſe man ſhould be free from all affections and paſſions whatſoever.

you ſhould be patient, and patient, and patient; ah! put theſe reprovers into the ſame furnace, and ſee how patient they will be: they ſay, there is no putting old mens heads upon young mens ſhoulders; and there is no putting old heads upon ſouls young in experience. The devil knew very well how it was when he ſaid, *Haſt thou not made an hedge about Job, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide; thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land; but put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face*; ſo we ſhould all do if God was to leave us to ourſelves, and our faith is not of the right ſort.

How ſhall we know if our faith is good? we often pray, Lord, give us Abraham's faith, but never pray, give us Abraham's trial at the ſame time. I was once in Scotland, at a great man's houſe, where ſeveral rich people were that knew Jeſus Chriſt; God having bleſſed my labours at a former viſit, I was deſired by the nobleman to pray; and I remember I prayed the Lord to give us great faith and patience; —O ſaid Satan, as ſtrong as if he had ſpoke to me, don't pray for that, for thou ſhalt have great

great trials. O, ſaid I, if that be the caſe, I will turn the devil's prayer againſt himſelf; and I prayed, *O Lord, give us great grace, and never mind what trials.* Often when we are under temptations, God takes us at our words: O, ſays one, what a prayer I had, I prayed for faith and patience; I was upon the mount, and never thought of coming down, and feeling a ſtorm again.

Fire, my brethren, not only burns and purges, but you know it ſeparates one thing from another, and is made uſe of in chymiſtry and mechanical buſineſſes. What could we do without fire? it tries metal to purge it: God Almighty knows, we are often purged more in one hour by a good ſound trial, than by a thouſand manifeſtations of his love. It is a fine thing to come purified, to come pardoned out of the furnace of affliction; it is intended to purge us, *to ſeparate the precious from the vile, the chaff from the wheat*; and God, in order to do this, is pleaſed to put us into one fire after another, which makes me love to ſee a good man under afflictions, becauſe it teaches ſomething of the work of God in the heart. I remember ſome years ago, when I firſt preached in the north of England,

at

at Shields near Newcaſtle, I went into a glaſs-houſe, and ſtanding very attentive, I ſaw ſeveral maſſes of burning glaſs of various forms: the workman took one piece of glaſs and put it into one furnace, then he put it into a ſecond, and then into a third: when I aſked him, why do you put this into ſo many fires? he anſwered, O, ſir, the firſt was not hot enough, nor the ſecond, and therefore we put it into the third, and that will make it tranſparent. Taking leave of him in a proper manner, it occurred to me, this would make a good ſermon: O, thought I, does this man put this glaſs into one furnace after another, that we may ſee through it; O may God put me into one furnace after another, that my ſoul may be tranſparent; that I may ſee God as he is. My brethren, we need to be purged; how apt are we to want to go to heaven upon a feather-bed; many go lying upon beds of pain and languiſhing, which is the King's highway thither. You know there are ſome ways in London called the king's road, and they are finely gravelled, but the King's road to heaven is ſtrowed with croſſes and afflictions. We are all apt to think well of being Chriſtians; it is very pretty talking of being Chriſtians,

tians, till we are put into one furnace after another; *think it not ſtrange*, ſaith the apoſtle, *concerning the fiery trial which is to try you.* What muſt I do? why, ſince I muſt be in the fire, I muſt thank my corruptions for it; God will not put you or me into the fire if there was not ſomething to be purged away; the grand thing is to learn to glorify God in the fire. *Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires.*

When do we glorify him? when we endeavour to get ſuch grace from the Lord, that we may not diſhonour him when we are under the croſs, and therefore we glorify God in the fire when we quietly endure it as a chaſtiſement for our ſins: if you keep watch now, and live near to God, you will never find that you are put into a fire, but you firſt brought yourſelves into it; and I do verily believe from my heart, that our ſin is always to be ſeen in our puniſhment. If any of you part from a child that he loves dearly, upon examination he will ſay, I find now the creature's gone, that the ivy twined too much about the oak; and then he turns off; ah! ſays he, God has met with me now. And you will find in all the Old and New Teſtament, that the afflictions of God's people were ſuitable to their faults: Ja-

cob was over-perſuaded by his mother to get the bleſſing by a lie; but he was a ſimple-hearted poor creature. Some perſons think nothing of a lie; if they can but get by it, they do not mind it; but an honeſt man will ſhun it. Jacob argues with his mother againſt it; O, ſays ſhe, *the curſe be on me, my ſon!* O dreadful! for a good woman to ſay ſo. Doubtleſs, ſhe was perſuaded God would give Jacob the bleſſing, but ſhe took a wrong way to obtain it; ſhe might have waited for the bleſſing to come with a bleſſing. How did God puniſh Jacob? why, in a night afterwards poor Jacob was impoſed upon by a wrong wife, he got a Leah inſtead of a Rachel; the poor creature was impoſed upon there, and ſo all along almoſt to the end of his life; he had a furnace of affliction. Happy they who pray in the furnace, Lord, let me know why thou doſt contend with me. Therefore God ſends this meſſage to Ely by Samuel, *the thing that thou knoweſt*, ſeems to me to refer to his too great lenity to his ſons; *the thing that thou knoweſt*; thou doſt not act like a magiſtrate. Theſe ſons were the means of bringing a judgment on his houſe, and breaking their father's neck: God Almighty keep us from bringing a rod upon ourſelves.

We

We glorify God in the fire when we bear it patiently. It is a dreadful thing when we are ſaying with Cain, *My puniſhment is greater than I can bear*; but the language of a ſoul that glorifies God in the fire is this, ſhall I, Lord, ſhall I a ſinful man, complain for the puniſhment of my ſins? It is a glorious thing when we can ſay with a good man, one of whoſe particular friends told me more than once, that when he was racked with pain, and groaning all night with trouble, he would often ſay, Lord, I groan; Lord, I groan; Lord, I groan; but, Lord Jeſus, I appeal to thee, thou knoweſt I do not grumble. Then we glorify God in the fire, when, though we feel pain and anguiſh, we at the ſame time ſay, Lord, we deſerve this and ten thouſand times more.

We glorify God in the fire alſo, when we are really and fully perſuaded, God will not put us in the fire but for our good, and his own glory. I am afraid ſome people think God does as ſome cheating apothecaries, that bring five things when they need not bring but one, eſpecially when they have ſome ſilly patients that love to be taking phyſic; they ſend one after another, when, perhaps, the beſt

thing would be to throw them all away; ſo we think of God, but it is a miſtake; he never ſends one but what is neceſſary, and ſomething to be purged away.

We glorify God in the fire when we ſay, Lord, don't let the fire go out till it has purged away all my droſs. Then we glorify God when we wiſh for the good of the fire, and not to have it extinguiſhed; when the ſoul can ſay, *Here I am, my God, do with me as ſeemeth good in thy ſight*; I know I ſhall not have one ſtroke but thou will give me a plaiſter, and let me know wherefore thou contendeſt with me.

We glorify God in the fire when we are content to ſay, *I know not what God does with me now, but I ſhall know hereafter.* Do you tell your children that are five years old the reaſon of things, no; and do you think God will tell us? *What ſhall this man do?* ſaith the diſciples; *what is that to thee?* ſaith Chriſt, *follow thou me.* You glorify God in the fire, when you are content to walk by faith and not by ſight.

You glorify God in the fire when you are not grumbling, but humbly ſubmitting to his will; a humble ſpirit walks not in ſulkineſs

and

and ſtubbornneſs: there are ſome ſpirits too ſtout, they will not ſpeak. When that awful meſſage was brought to Ely, what does he ſay? *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*; let my children be killed, whatever be done it is the Lord's doing; only, Lord, ſave my ſoul at laſt.

We glorify God in the fire, when in the midſt of the fire we can ſing God's high praiſes. Thus the children of Iſrael glorified the Lord; the ſong of the three children in the fiery furnace is a ſweet ſong; as are all that are made in the fire. *O all the works of the Lord, praiſe and magnify him for ever!* Then we glorify God in the fire when we rejoice in him, when we not only think, but know it beſt, and can thank God for ſtriking us; can thank God for whipping us; can bleſs God for not letting us alone; thank God for not ſaying, *let him alone:* this is to glorify God in the fire. *Not only ſo,* ſaith the apoſtle, *but we glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience.*

In a word, we glorify the Lord in the fire when we have in exerciſe, patience, meekneſs, humility; learning more to diſtruſt ourſelves, having a deeper knowledge of our own weak-

weakneſs, and of God's omnipotence and grace. Happy when we can look back and ſay, thus have I been enabled to glorify God in the fire. Who can put his hand to his heart and ſay, I have glorified God in the fire as I ought? inſtead of that I am afraid the ſoul muſt ſay, that inſtead of being thankful and reſigned, I have been fretful; and becauſe I will not find fault with myſelf, nor let the world know I find fault with God, I find fault with all about me. Did you never find yourſelf in ſuch a humour when your ſpirits were low? I heard a good man once ſpeak on thoſe words, *they ſhall bring forth fruit in old age:* O the fruit, ſaid he, is peviſhneſs; I thought it was the infirmity of old age, the fruit of which ought to be heavenly-mindedneſs, deadneſs to the world, and a livelineſs to God.

My brethren, let us humble ourſelves to-night, and let us be aſhamed and abaſhed before God, and wonder he hath not ſtruck us into hell when we have been complaining the fire was too hot, that God ſent us not to the devil. Let us weep, let us weep, let us weep for our ſtubbornneſs. Happy they who are uſed to be put into the fire betimes! *It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth.* Some years

years ago, when I was at the Orphan-houſe, they told me they were going to yoke two ſteers together, one ſturdy and old, the other a little one, on which they no ſooner put the yoke, but he kicked once or twice, and then bore it very well: O, thought I, it is a good thing to have the yoke betimes.

Are any of you now in the furnace, are any of you troubled, or can any of you ſay, I have no trouble; a calm is ſometimes the fore-runner of a ſtorm; thank God, you are not in the fire; ſurely you have been in the fire. There is the devil's fire; the fires of *the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life:* God help you to come out of theſe fires, leſt they damn your ſouls for ever. You muſt be put either in the devil's fire or God's fire, and the devil's fires are hotteſt, becauſe there is no God to ſupport under the trouble they bring upon the ſoul. O what a dreadful thing it is to be in the devil's fire continually, and to go out of the fire of the devil here to burn with the devil in hell hereafter! If there are any of you in this caſe, Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhorten them, Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſanctify his afflictions to his people, as he did to one of the priſoners laſt Wedneſday: how ſweetly he behaved! while

while the others were curſing and ſwearing, toſſing up who ſhould ſit on the right hand in the cart, he was glorifying God, thanking God he was ſent there, and going to be executed: God, ſaith he, hath ſtopt me, I might have gone on in ſin to ruin. O ſend to my father, go to him, warn him to *flee from the wrath to come:* ſomebody went to his parent, and the father ſent back this *loving* meſſage; tell him to mind his own ſoul, and be damn'd! O, dear Lord, what lengths has man gone! never was ſuch a meſſage ſent to a ſon before; he bid him mind his own ſoul and be damn'd! God grant none of you may ever have ſuch a frame of mind as that! O remember fire hardens as well as ſoftens; and if you are not better by afflictions you will be worſe: and indeed you will know you cannot come out of the furnace as you went in, you will either be hardened or elſe be purified; and if this be the caſe, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt help you to bear the fire now, that you may never be caſt into the fire of hell. God haſte you, haſten you that are out of the devil's fire to flee, flee, ye weary ſouls, to Jeſus Chriſt; fly to the Lamb of God, from hell to heaven, as far as you can from theſe helliſh fires, to the fire of his bleſſed merit and love.

Happy

Happy you that have got into Chriſt's fire! happy you that have found his fires in your ſouls! I believe many ſouls have: O Lord Jeſus Chriſt help you to glorify him in whatever fires he ſhall be pleaſed to ſend you, and into whatever furnaces he ſhall be pleaſed to put you: we ſhall then ſing "*the church triumphant*," much better than we ſing to-night; we ſhall ſee Jeſus Chriſt ready to help us when we are in the furnace: O that this thought may make every poor ſinner ſay, by the help of God I will be a Chriſtian; by the help of God, if I muſt burn, it ſhall be burning with the love of Chriſt. I will ſay then, O Lord, glorify thyſelf by ſnatching me as a brand from the devil's fire. O that this might be the cry of every heart!

I am going to aſk a favour of you to-night which I never did before, and, perhaps, may not again for ſome time: I have had complaints made to me by the perſons that take care of the poor, that the poor's ſtock is very low; though I cannot ſpeak on Sunday night, yet I will ſpeak a word to the poor on Wedneſday evening. There are numbers of poor that are ready to periſh, and if you drop ſomething to them in love, God will take

care to repay you when you come to judgment. We ſhall not only glorify God by a ſubmiſſion to his will, when he is putting us in the fire, but in doing any good, when we lay all the glory at the foot of Jeſus; which God grant for Chriſt's ſake. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON VII.

The Beloved of God.

DEUT. xxxiii. ver. 12.

And of Benjamin, he ſaid, The beloved of the Lord ſhall dwell in ſafety, by him; and the Lord ſhall cover him all the day long, and he ſhall dwell between his ſhoulders.

OH! what a diſmal ſight is it, to ſee an old man with his hoary head grown grey in ſin, and hardened in iniquity.

On the other hand, I believe to all that conſider rightly, there is no grander ſight almoſt under the ſun, than to ſee an old grey-headed man keeping up a conſiſtent character; and proving, by his conduct, that *his path*, like that of the juſt, *is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more to the perfect day*; eſpecially when perſons have been called to act in a public character; when they have been eminent either for the highneſs of their ſtation,

or for the largeneſs of their income. It is on this account that I admire old Jacob; how grand he looked when leaning on his ſtaff, with all the compoſure in the world, under a divine influence, bleſſing his children ſtanding round him. But, methinks, there is one who was called to act a more public part, namely, Moſes, who was honoured of God to be a great legiſlator, king in Jeſhurun, a lawgiver between Judah's feet, as pupils uſed to be at the feet of their teachers, to receive their inſtruction; if you have a mind to ſee how bright he ſhines, you muſt read Deut. xxxii. indeed you muſt read all Deuteronomy, which is nothing but a ſermon that Moſes, at various times, preached to the children of Iſrael; and having done preaching, he ſang a hymn of his own compoſing, and that too at a time when he knew, at the very finiſhing the ſong, he ſhould immediately have his ſoul kiſſed away, and be called to ſing a better ſong in the kingdom of heaven. A perſon would need a good deal of compoſure, a good deal of the Spirit's influences, a large meaſure of it, chearfully thus to ſtand in view of death, juſt on the very borders of the grave; you ſee this in chap. xxxii. and here in chap. xxxiii. One would have thought

thought he had ſaid enough, yet he ſeems as it were not to know how to leave off; he parted from the people bleſſing them; they had uſed him ill, they provoked him in the wilderneſs; he had bore with them many, many long years; ſure you would have thought he would have went away in a huff; no, that eminent ſun by no means goes down in wrath; his eyes did not ſo much as wax dim, nor his intellectual powers impair in all that time: he ſweetly gives them all a bleſſing before he goes. If you read this chap. xxxiii. you will find how various, yet ſpecial, are the bleſſings which, in a prophetic ſtrain, he foretels ſhould attend particular perſons, or tribes. I have been reading them over, and though I admire them all, I was at a loſs which to ſpeak from, till the bleſſing of Benjamin fixed my attention, not only as ſweet, but inſtructing. *The beloved of the Lord ſhall dwell in ſafety, by him; and the Lord ſhall cover him all the day long, he ſhall dwell between his ſhoulders.* This is a bleſſing indeed, if we look only to the literal interpretation of the words, and a literal commentator can go no further; he muſt confine them to Benjamin; and will tell us, that this ſcripture was fulfilled at the building of the Temple,

Temple. The Temple was built upon two hills, one in the tribe of Benjamin, the other in the tribe of Judah; the Temple being built there, and Benjamin being placed near it, then Benjamin dwells in ſafety by the Lord, by having his lot caſt near the Temple. How often, alas! is it the caſe, I am ſure it is very often the caſe in London, the nearer the church the further from God; but ſome make good uſe of it, and are glad to get near the church that they may be nearer God. The Temple being placed between two hills, ſo Benjamin as it were dwells between God's ſhoulders; ſo far a literal commentator can go, here he ſtops; a ſpiritual commentator, and a ſpiritual reader, go further; O, ſays he, this is true, but at the ſame time this is not the whole truth; and I am perſuaded, when a perſon is helped by the Spirit to read the ſcriptures, the declarations that are made, and thoſe particular promiſes, the true believer applies with great propriety to himſelf; and therefore I think I may venture to aver, that the bleſſing which Moſes here pronounces upon him in the name of the Lord, belongs to God's people in all ages whatever; God, in his infinite mercy, grant that this bleſſing may deſcend upon us and ours,

ours, that it may deſcend to your lateſt poſterity.

Obſerve how wonderfully the perſons, to whom the bleſſing is given, are characterized: of Benjamin it is ſaid, *the beloved of the Lord*; the beloved of the Lord, pray who are they? why, the men that the ſcriptures always ſpeak of, whoſe conſtant uniform character is, they love God in all ages. It is not ſaid, the Preſbyterians ſhall dwell in ſafety; Moſes never heard of a Preſbyterian in his life; he never heard of the name; nor it is ſaid the Independents ſhall dwell in ſafety; he never heard of that word; nor is it ſaid the Papiſts ſhall dwell in ſafety; he never heard of Papiſts, nor of the pope; nor is it ſaid that the Church of England ſhall dwell in ſafety, no; neither is it ſaid that the Methodiſts ſhall dwell in ſafety, though I truſt there are a great many good people among theſe mongrels of the church; but it is ſpoken of all the people of God; God help us all to apply it to ourſelves.

Here is a diſpute between the Arminians and the Calviniſts: aſk an Arminian what is meant by *the beloved of the Lord*; O, ſay they that are for general redemption, the beloved of the Lord ſignifies, all the men that were ever born

born into the world; that is a good broad bridge to take them in; but broad bridges are not always the ſtrongeſt bridges in the world. The Arminians will aſſert it, that Judas was as much beloved of God as Peter, or any other of the apoſtles; and thoſe that are not Arminians, but are what you call Quakers, and there are a good many, I believe, among them, that have better hearts than heads, they ſay, that we are all alike, that we all come into the world with a ſeed of grace, and ſhall be happy according to the improvement of that grace; hence they talk nothing of a Chriſt *without* but *within*; happy they that experience a Chriſt within! God's mercy is ſure, and over all his works; and in one ſenſe, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the Saviour of all men, that is, of all ſorts of men; even the wicked are beholden to Jeſus Chriſt, whom they deſpiſe, for every worldly comfort they enjoy; in this ſenſe we ſhould learn to love as our Lord, we are told, loved the young man when he ſaw he had been a harmleſs and good liver: but we muſt go more to what we call Calviniſm, what I call ſcriptural truth. The love which Jeſus Chriſt bore for the young man, quite differed from that love with which he loved Martha, Mary,

Mary, and their brother; there was a cargo for you! three in one family; God grant it may be your happy lot and mine! two ſiſters and one brother, three to entertain Jeſus Chriſt, all in a peculiar manner beloved of the Lord. It is not ſaid of Benjamin, they ſhall, that is, they that love the Lord, they ſhall dwell in ſafety, no; it would not be ſo ſtrong to them, as to ſay *the beloved of the Lord*; for God knows our love is not worth a ſhilling; all the faith of God's people, ſays biſhop Hall, is but meer infidelity; and all the love of the people of God is but meer hatred, compared with God's love, or that which his law juſtly requires; therefore it is ſaid, *beloved of the Lord*, and that becauſe if ever we love God, he firſt loved us, which is what Moſes's very expreſſion means; as ſtreams flow from the fountain, ſo they ſhall return to it. Hence the apoſtle ſays, *Knowing your election, brethren, beloved of God.* I know very well the Myſticks talk of loving God with a love for himſelf only, without any reſpect to the creature at all; that is, we muſt love God without any regard at all for what God has done for us; nay, ſome go ſo far as to ſay, that if we do not ſo love God, we are not converted,

though we have as much grace as we can have; that we do not love God properly till we love him for what he is, not what he has done for us: I verily believe, the angels do not love God in that manner; and we cannot love God till we are made partakers of a divine nature, and have eyes given us to see his glory.

The grand enquiry is then, how shall I know that I am one of the beloved of the Lord? The natural man never minds the love of God; he flatters himself he loves God naturally, that the love of God is a plant that grows in nature's garden; but a spiritual person does not so. What does the king take notice of me? does the king look pleasant upon me in a drawing-room? am I called to wait upon him? am I beloved of this, and that, and the other person? if I am, let God go, I care not; if I have but the love of this and that courtier, I care not whether God loves me or no; this will not do for an awakened soul; and therefore the grand enquiry, and one proof of a person's being awakened is, how shall I know whether God loves me or not? why try; I am persuaded of it, that we may as well know that God loves us, and we love God, as we may know that the sun shines at

noon-

noon-day; how ſhall I know it but by the effects of this love, by the fruits of it? That great man, Dr. Watts, who was called the ſweet ſinger of Iſrael, ſays, "we ſhould go firſt to the grammar-ſchool of faith and repentance, before we go to the univerſity of predeſtination:" whereas, the devil would have them go firſt to the univerſity, to examine whether they were elected or rejected, or no: they ſhould do as a good woman once did, when ſatan tempted her, and wanted to diſtreſs her, that there were but few to be ſaved; ſhe ſaid, if there were but two to be ſaved, ſhe would ſtrive to be one of them. Surely I am beloved of the Lord, if my natural enmity againſt the Lord is ſlain. How do I know I love a perſon? how can you prove that you love me? why, ſay you, I hated you the other day: how many people met I with the other day, that could a few weeks ago have pulled me out of Tottenham-court, but God has overcome their hearts. The perſon now confeſſes his former enmity, and when that enmity is removed, and you are reconciled to them, cannot you know that you love them? and if God has removed that enmity to Chriſt out of your hearts, ſurely you are one of the beloved of the Lord.

We are the beloved of the Lord, if we are brought to abhor and renounce that which ſtands between us and the Lord; I mean, our curſed ſelf-righteouſneſs. Can I prove that I have renounced my own duties, that I am ſick of my duties as well as my ſins; none but the beloved of the Lord ſee this: an enemy to the Lord may have this in his head, but it is only a friend of the Lord that has this in his heart: a talkative profeſſor can ſpeak of it; you may teach, perhaps, a parrot to pray, but it is odds to talk like a parrot, and experience like a Chriſtian. Now if I have renounced my own righteouſneſs, and been helped to truſt to Chriſt's, to believe on the Son of God, let ſatan ſay what he will, I am ſure I am the beloved of the Lord, for none but thoſe that are beloved by him with an everlaſting love, are brought to believe on him.

I may know I am beloved of the Lord, from what? why, experiencing *his love ſhed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghoſt.* Jonathan loved David as his own ſoul. Moſt of you know what love is in a carnal ſenſe; and if there be a union of ſouls between creature and creature, ſurely there muſt be a union of ſouls between the Creator and the creature

beloved

beloved of God; it cannot be otherwiſe; this love will have its effects.

If I am beloved of the Lord, if having his love in my heart, I ſhow it by loving thoſe he has loved. Some people may ſay, I love you, but I do not love thoſe about you, your friends; why you are not bound to love all alike, but it may teach you to be civil to that perſon's beloved. As ſoon as ever we hear of a Chriſtian, as ſoon as ever we hear of a believer, as ſoon as ever we hear of a ſinner turning to God, O it will rejoice us; and we ſhall be like the angels in heaven, who *rejoice over one ſinner's repentance, more than over ninety-nine juſt perſons that need no repentance.* Some people may ſay, I love dearly to hear of a perſon's being converted by ſuch a miniſter; I love dearly to hear of perſons converted by a diſſenter; I love dearly to hear of perſons converted by a churchman, but I do not like people ſhould be converted by this and that perſon; why I believe there are a great many people whoſe hearts are thus narrow, but this mixture is not of God; and I pray God they may know it by experience; that they may know they are beloved of God, then they will rejoice when other people are brought to believe on

him,

him, whoever is made the inſtrument. *Grace and mercy be with all them that love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity.* What would have become of poor Paul if he had only loved his own followers: the Romans he never ſaw till he was taken there a priſoner, but he loved all the reſt of the apoſtles, writ letters to all ſorts, not to their particular parties or churches, but to all thoſe *that loved the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity*; and if we do love in this manner, we may be aſſured we are beloved of the Lord, for none but the Lord could beget ſuch love in us.

If we are beloved of the Lord, we ſhall be hated by the world. *If you were of the world, the world would love you, but becauſe you are not of the world, but I have choſen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Will you make me believe that any of you are beloved of the Lord, that never loſt your good character by it; why you may as well make me believe that you are emperors of the world: where is the bleſſing the ſermon on the mount ſpeaks of; where is the bleſſing of perſecution; where is the bleſſing of being hated of all men; where is the bleſſing of being hated for the croſs? you love the Lord, and

and not carry the croſs after you; you love the Lord, and not be hated as your Lord was? I don't ſay all are hated alike; poor miniſters are ſet in the front of the battle; in proportion to our ſucceſſes we ſhall be hated. There are numbers of miniſters now ſleep in whole ſkins, that were formerly in a worſe plight; the devil diſturbs them not becauſe they are quite civil, and do not trouble and contradict him; but if you oppoſe the world and the devil, the world will hate you; and no greater proof of being beloved of the Lord, than the world hating you, but it muſt be for Chriſt's ſake. So Ahab ſaid of the prophet, *all his propheſying is againſt me*; I hate him; the world hated him; *the world hated me*, ſays our Lord, *before it hated you*; and the apoſtles, when they began to ſpeak for God too, they were hated like their Lord; and glory to God for it, for it is a bleſſed mark of their belonging to God, when they are honoured to ſuffer for him, and we are never right till we are bearing the croſs: to ſee men or women ſleeping under the croſs, ſculking and hiding from it, is this love? give me a profeſſor that will wear a cockade in his hat, and is never eaſier than when he is combating the enemies of his King.

If

If I am the beloved of the Lord, I really ſhall live above the world. You may ſay what you will, and you may bring the ſcriptures as low as you think proper, *but the friendſhip of the world is hatred to God; and if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* Now by not loving the world, I don't mean that you ſhould ſhut up your ſhops, and run into a convent: how idle for perſons to ſay they love God, and hide themſelves from the world; that is no religion at all. But the greateſt proof of a Chriſtian's loving God is, I am in the world, but not of it; I work with my hands all the day, but my heart is from it. I remember a dear friend once ſent me word, many years ago, how buſy he was morning and night, up early and late; perhaps, ſays he, you will think by this account, I am worldly; he ſaid, no, ſir, I thank God that my heart is above the world: God grant we may thus prove we love God! I don't ſay, but many that love the Lord may be in another ſituation; but when perſons are enabled to leave all for Chriſt, it is a great mercy: God be praiſed, we have ſome ſuch; God add to their happineſs.

They

They that love the Lord, will ſtudy to keep from offending God, not for fear of being damned, but becauſe ſin murdered his dear Son; there are a great many people abſtain from ſin for fear of puniſhment; but hear what Joſeph ſaid, *My maſter has done thus and thus by me, how can I therefore do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt God?* my God that loves me; ſo they would not ſtab him, becauſe he has been wounded enough already.

If we are the beloved of the Lord, we ſhall be willing to work for the Lord; faith without works is the religion of every carnal man; make an end of one good work and then begin another, and lay it down and wonder that Jeſus Chriſt ſhould accept any thing at your hands. I knew a lady ſometime ago, that wanted ſtill more to be employed for God; ſays ſhe, if Jeſus Chriſt would but help me to do ſuch and ſuch a thing I have in view, O I would kiſs his feet, and dedicate myſelf more and more to his honour: a true Chriſtian loves to be thus employed, but above all he is glad he has the blood of Chriſt to waſh his duties in.

I ſhall mention but one thing more, though I might mention twenty; if we have the love of God in our hearts, though we cannot get

over the fears of death at all times, yet I think the bent of the mind of such a person will be, when shall I see the object of my love, *him whom my soul loves?* they sit at ordinances, and long to be led to the fountain head. *I am in a strait between two*, says Paul; the word signifies a strong, an intense desire to be with Christ: he does not say to be in heaven, but *to be with Christ, which is far better*; but to stay here is better for you, therefore you should be content to stay, not because you love the world, but as willing to wait your Master's call. I could not help admiring while I was reading it, that when Christ ascended to heaven, one angel, one particular angel, it must have been a blessed one, left those that were attending Christ into glory, stopped in the way, for what? why, to preach to the apostles: *Why stand ye thus gazing into heaven?* I am ashamed of you, says he; here is an angel, one of the convoy, waiting upon them: he does not say, let me go to heaven with thee, and let me come down again and preach, no; he stays down thus to preach to a few poor fishermen. Lord search us, Lord try us, Lord God Almighty help us to examine ourselves, that we may know whether we are beloved of the Lord or not.

So

So that ſome may ſay, I think I can apply all the marks, though I don't depend upon marks. I have a number of bills here to-night; one ſays, if I am beloved of the Lord, why am I ſo poor? another ſays, if I am beloved of the Lord, why am I ſo afflicted? ſays another, if I am beloved of the Lord, why am I left to ſtarve; can I think God loves me, when I ſee thouſands and thouſands ſquandered away every day, and yet my poor babes groaning, my poor children quite emaciated, for want only of a little bread that I ſee in the baker's ſhop as I go along; if I am beloved of the Lord, how is it that my poor children are ready to cry for bread, and I have none to give them; that others are adorned with diamonds, but I have not ſo much as a rag to put on my little one's back. If I am beloved of the Lord, how is it that my friends are againſt me; my children, inſtead of being a bleſſing, are a curſe, and break my heart. If I am beloved of the Lord, how is it that I have ſo many domeſtic trials that cauſe me to cry out, *Wo is me that I ſojourn in Meſheck, and dwell in the tents of Kedar.* If I am beloved of the Lord, how is it that I am harraſſed with blaſphemous thoughts thus; the trials I meet with in bringing down

the outward man. If I am beloved of the Lord, how is it that inſtead of living in plenty, I now want bread to eat, and ſhould be glad to have it from thoſe *I once ſcorned to ſet with the dogs of my flock? Whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth.* Our dear Jeſus was never more beloved of his father than when he cried out, *My God! my God! why haſt thou forſaken me?* never more beloved of his father than when he was ſweating great drops of blood, when he cried, *Father, if it be poſſible let this cup paſs from me.* I remember a dear miniſter of Chriſt, now in Suffolk, told me, when he was in Scotland, going to receive the ſacrament, he was ſo dry and dark, and benumbed and tempted, that he thought he would go away; as he was going this word came to his mind, when was Jeſus Chriſt moſt acceptable to his Father? when did he give the greateſt trial of his love? when he cried out, *My God! my God! why haſt thou forſaken me?* Why then, ſays he, upon this I will venture; if I periſh, I periſh at Chriſt's feet; and he came away filled with comfort from his bleſſed God and Father in Chriſt.

Well

Well then, what is to be done to thoſe that are beloved of the Lord? here's for you, *they ſhall dwell in ſafety*; why? *they ſhall dwell between his ſhoulders*; obſerve the expreſſion, the prophet ſays *they ſhall dwell in love. Will God indeed dwell on earth?* ſays Solomon; yes, God, ſays he, dwells in my earthly heart, made heavenly by the grace of God. Did ever any hear ſuch an expreſſion from the mouth of God, *I will be thy God*; *I am thy ſhield, and thy exceeding great reward?* He does not ſay an angel ſhall go; if God had only ſaid in his word, that I was to be kept by angels, I am ſure my wicked heart would deſpair, becauſe it would deceive all the angels in heaven: but God ſaith, *I will be thy keeper*; ſo they that would hurt his people, muſt go through God himſelf. *They ſhall dwell on high*; *bread ſhall be given to them, and their waters ſhall be ſure. They are kept by the mighty power of God through faith, to everlaſting ſalvation.* It is ſaid, *they ſhall dwell between his ſhoulders:* the government of the church, and the world, and all, are upon the Redeemer's ſhoulders, and the Lord's everlaſting arms are under his people. Obſerve it is ſaid, *they dwell in ſafety*; and very often we are ſafeſt when we think we are moſt in danger.

They

They ſhall dwell in ſafety; thoſe that are lovers of the Lord Jeſus ſhall dwell ſafely with God on earth, and eternally with him in heaven. O may God bleſs this fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſome of God's poor, and, perhaps, doubting beloved ones. Come you poor ſouls, I often think that this *field* preaching is particularly comfortable to the poor; whenever *field* preaching is ſtopped, farewel to the power of religion. When poor people have been working hard all day, how ſweet muſt it be for them to come to a place of worſhip, and get a lift for to-morrow: may the Lord God bleſs this barley-bread! If you can wrap yourſelves in God, let the world hate you; God's children are the greateſt plagues and trials one to another, but God loves them, God ſmiles upon them, and therefore they ſhall dwell in ſafety. The devil told me I ſhould not dwell in ſafety, but I bid him defiance, and turned him to Deut. xxxiii. and told him Benjamin's lot was mine; *the beloved of the Lord ſhall dwell in ſafety by him.*

Wo, wo, wo be to you that have no marks of being beloved of the Lord. Have we any prophane Eſaus here to-night, that are ſaying, do not tell me of your being beloved of the Lord;

Lord; if I can have the love of ſuch a perſon, I don't care whether God loves me or not; you may tell me God loves people when they are afflicted, I want none of theſe marks, I think God loves me becauſe I am in a good frame; I think God loves me becauſe I proſper; I think God loves me becauſe I am very healthy and ſtrong; I do not care whether I wait upon God or not, or give to the poor or not. I will not ſoften the matter, there is no going to heaven without wearing a fool's coat. O, you may ſay, that is owing to your imprudence; you make people uneaſy, and ſet them upon a falſe ſcent, and make them their own perſecutors; thank God, I can go into a hundred companies, and not give them reaſon to ſay I am a Methodiſt: I can go into company and ſing an innocent ſong, I don't tell them I have a Tabernacle hymn-book in my pocket. There are few have the courage that the gentleman had who loved God, and went to ſee ſome carnal relations after he became a fool for Chriſt's ſake: ſays one of the relations, it is always our cuſtom after dinner to ſing a ſong, and aſked him to ſing; he ſaid, he would in his turn; two of them ſung; his relation ſaid to him, come, couſin, ſing; ſays he, I have not

not ſung a ſong a good while, but, if you pleaſe, I will ſing a hymn: he ſung it out, but they never aſked him to ſing again, nor did they ſing afterwards. How ſweet it is to go through boldly with a thing for Chriſt! Do not you think you are a coward? are you not aſhamed? are any of you ſuch cowards as to plead your prudence: God help you to be unmaſked to-night. I do not know whether you go to a maſquerade, but you have a dreadful maſque upon your ſouls, a dreadful religious viſage. I heard ſomebody appeared the other night, in order to bring contempt upon us, in a Methodiſt dreſs, that was one of the dreſſes. O how can they do ſo? ſay you; how canſt thou do ſo? pretend to be a Methodiſt among God's people, and behave light and fooliſh among the children of the devil; for ſhame unmaſk yourſelves, for God will, by death, unmaſk your ſoul, and ſhow your hypocriſy. The word hypocrite is taken from a ſtage-player, who acts that part he is not: God, of his infinite mercy, keep all here from ſtopping ſhort.

If any of you are awakened and convinced, the Lord grant you may never reſt till you know you are the beloved of the Lord. Ah! ſays

ſay you, I ſhall never know that, that I am the beloved of the Lord: I am that old grey-headed wretch you mentioned at the beginning of your ſermon; can God love me a drunkard, ſabbath-breaker, a whoremonger, an adulterer, an unclean wretch as ever trod on the ground! Pray what was Paul? what was the jailor? what were all the three thouſand that were converted at once; what was their caſe? nay, what was Adam the firſt ſinner? and yet Adam and Eve both, I believe, received mercy of God; ſhe is therefore called *the mother of all living*, becauſe ſhe is the mother of all believers. Come then at a venture, come then, throw thyſelf upon Chriſt; do not ſay, Pardon my iniquities becauſe they are ſmall, but ſay, *Lord, pardon my iniquities for they are great.* One that was executed to-day for forging ſomething to rob his father; what a father deal thus with his ſon? well, ſaid I, it is ſo with a man, but our heavenly father will pardon; and though the law is called a fiery law, yet there is, bleſſed be God, a new and living way. Oh ſinners! oh ſinners! God help you to come and venture, and ſtrive, though you have none of the marks that have been mentioned, yet ſay, God can put theſe marks

upon me. I have been courting this and that perſon's love; nay, I made no other uſe of coming to worſhip, but to look out for ſomething to advance myſelf. I have been looking out for nothing but beauty; I have been looking out for nothing but money, or ſomething or other to make my fortune; but now begone, vain world; now, Lord, I would look after thee. That you may know you are the beloved of the Lord, dwell in ſafety on earth, and after death be conveyed to dwell with, and love him to all eternity, God grant for Chriſt's ſake. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON VIII.

The Furnace of Affliction.

ISAIAH xlviii. ver. 10.

I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

GRACIOUS words indeed! words worthy of a God! who has promised that *he will not always chastise, that he will not keep his anger for ever*; but, on the contrary, will take care in the midst of judgment to remember mercy; and if he strikes with one hand, will uphold with the other.

I hope I need not tell you, my dear hearers, that these words were spoken to comfort the captives in Babylon, who, for their various sins and great backslidings, constrained the God of love, the God of mercy, their covenant God, to send them captives into a foreign soil; upon this their enemies take occasion to insult them, *where are now your songs?* say they; give us one of your Temple songs, with which

you uſed to pour out your allelujahs; let us ſee now whether you can praiſe him in a ſtrange land. The enemy of ſouls joining inwardly with them without, makes ſome that can ſing, even afraid *that God hath forgotten to be gracious, that he hath ſhut up his loving kindneſs in diſpleaſure*, that the darkneſs in which they were now involved would not be a temporary, but a perpetual one; and notwithſtanding the prophets were ſent in mercy of God to comfort them in their trouble, yet many of them were tempted to ſay, *all men*, yea the prophets, *were liars*; it is very well if they ſtopped there, and did not ſay, God is a liar too. The enemy being thus ſuffered to break in upon them like a flood, it was high time for the bleſſed God to lift up a ſtandard againſt him; and therefore the great Redeemer, the angel of the everlaſting covenant, lets them know that he would ſome time or other, nay, very ſpeedily, appear to relieve his afflicted people: he aſſures them, that however for a while he might ſuffer them to be tried, he would cauſe a ſpeedy deliverance, that ſhould make them look upon him as their God; and this not for any merit found in this people, not for any good foreſeen, but he ſays,

for

for my own name's ſake; that the heathen might not ſay God had utterly forſaken them, he will appear for their relief, and *make them more than conquerors through him that loved them*; that however dark the ſeaſon of affliction might be, yet he would let his own people know that all that happened, happened out of love; that it was ſo far from being true, that they were really caſt off from God, that, on the contrary, he intended to over-rule theſe troubles, both foreign and domeſtic, to bring them nearer to, and at laſt to lodge them ſafe in the world above: well therefore for their comfort might it be uſhered in thus, *for my name's ſake will I defer my anger, and for my praiſe will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.* And to fix their attention and gratitude, 'tis added, *behold I have refined thee, but not with ſilver*; for this is ſo far from being contrary to the everlaſting decree, or purpoſe, hid in my boſom, that, on the contrary, it is the fulfilling it; for, ſaith God in the words of our text, *I have choſen thee in the furnace of affliction.*

Though the words are ſpoken in the ſingular number, yet they are of a complex and large import; the great God not only ſpeaks

to

to them as a people collectively conſidered, but particularizes them in this manner; not *I have choſen you, but I have choſen thee*; for the word of God itſelf will never, never, never do us good, if it is not applied by the bleſſed Spirit of God to you and I. The wiſdom and kindneſs of the Holy Ghoſt deſerves our notice; had the prophet gone on and ſaid, *I have choſen you*, unbelief might have ſaid, ah, this propheſy belongs only to the people of Iſrael, the words were addreſſed to thoſe who were under the Jewiſh diſpenſation, what have I to do with them? or unbelief would perſuade us to ſay ſo of ſuch a general promiſe as this; but when it is ſaid I have choſen *thee*, and we know that no ſcripture is of private interpretation, but, like its bleſſed author, is *the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever*, there is no loop-hole, as it were, for unbelief to creep out at; but every believer may, in all ages, in the words of the text, ſay to himſelf, *God has choſen me in the furnace of affliction.* Perhaps, there is not a more comfortable paſſage in the whole book of God; I do not know of one that has a greater tendency to ſilence a complaining child of God, or to make a poor ſuffering believer happy, and to reſt under the

the promiſe, to kiſs the rod of God that ſtrikes the blow.

Where ſhall I begin, where ſhall I end? the very firſt words open ſuch a field, that eternity itſelf will be but juſt long enough for us to take a view of it; the time is come that even ſome good people that have the grace of God in their hearts, have ſuch muddy heads as to kick at the doctrine of election, and look upon it as having a tendency to make us bad in our heads, or Antinomians in our hearts; but if we have eyes to ſee, and ears to hear, and if our hearts are really informed by the Spirit; if we have been anointed with his eye-ſalve, O then electing, ſovereign, diſtinguiſhing love flows in ſuch a ſcene, ſuch a tranſporting ſcene, as will make a believer's heart leap for joy. For my own part, I know no other doctrine that can truly humble the man; for either God muſt chuſe us, or we muſt chuſe God; either God muſt be the firſt mover, or man muſt be the firſt mover; either God muſt chuſe them on account of ſome goodneſs, on account of ſome purity, or acts of piety, or God muſt chuſe them merely of his grace, for his own name's ſake, and to let us know that we have not choſen him, but he has choſen us. I verily

believe,

believe, that the grand reaſon why ſuch doctrine is ſo ſpurned at, and hated by carnal people, is, that it ſtrikes at the very root of human pride, cuts the ſinews of free-will all to pieces, and brings the poor ſinner to lie down at the foot of ſovereign grace; and, let his attainments in the ſchool of Chriſt be ever ſo great, it conſtrains him to cry out, Lord, why me! why me! Our Maſter, and I think we ſhould not attempt to be wiſer than our Maſter was, ſpeaks particularly of and to his own ſchool, his little college of apoſtles: *Thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me; I have choſen you, but ye have not choſen me.—Becauſe I have choſen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Before they were fully enlightened, though they were afterwards brought more to the light, two of them at firſt ſaid, *we have found the Meſſiah*; yet when they were ſunk deeper in the knowledge of themſelves, they changed their note, and ſaid, the Meſſiah has found us. Obſerve the manner of the Redeemer's addreſſing our firſt parent, when their guilt had cauſed them to hide themſelves, *Adam, where art thou?* Pray who called firſt, did Adam call after Chriſt, or did Chriſt call after him; or do you think there is

any

any difference between us and Adam, or that we have got better hearts than Adam had; do you think we are wiſer and better now? Adam run away from God, and ſo ſhould we to this very day, unleſs Jeſus Chriſt had called us to himſelf.

Some perſons, perhaps, may ſay, Well, I like your doctrine very well; God chuſes us, you ſay, when we have no regard to any good works at all, therefore I will go on ſinning, becauſe the fitter I ſhall be for God's grace; and the fitter thou mayſt be for hell.—Grace does not deſtroy the uſe of the law; an honeſt heart will draw that inference from it, as a good woman once did when the devil told her, that either God had choſen her and ſhe ſhould be ſaved, or if ſhe was rejected ſhe ſhould be damned, ſo, ſaid he, you need not ſtrive; ſhe anſwered, if there were but two to be ſaved, I would ſtrive to be one of them: God help us to draw that inference.

Now this word *choſen*, refers us to God's eternal election; it comprehends, and is the ſource of all that God has done for believers, for every individual believer in particular when Jeſus bowed his head and gave up the ghoſt. Hence the apoſtle, in the eighth of the Ro-

mans, mentioning this doctrine in the cleareſt manner, triumphs over the accuſer by aſking, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* and in the ſame chapter declares, *that it is God that glorifies:* for though glorification is the laſt thing done to us, yet it is the firſt thing God deſigns for us. What is the great thing for a natural man to hear? what is it? why, not only that God has choſen us, but *choſen us in the furnace of affliction:* O that the Spirit of God may vouchſafe to tranſcribe theſe words into our hearts! God help thee to take it to thyſelf, O man; to take it to thyſelf, O woman; to take it to thyſelf whoever thou art that art either a Chriſtian now, or deſires or hopes to be a Chriſtian before thou dieſt, *I have choſen thee in the furnace of affliction.*

What can be the meaning of the words? why, 'tis very plain that the import of them muſt be this; I have choſen thee, and it is my determination from everlaſting to the end of time, and for ever. I have choſen thee with this determination, that the way to heaven ſhould be through the road of affliction: this is the believer's way, eſpecially the miniſters of Chriſt. When Paul was converted,

pray

pray what preferment did God promiſe him? was it to be a great dignitary in the church? no, nothing about the church? was it any more eaſe, was it to wear a triple crown, were perſons to come and kiſs his toe, what preferment did God chuſe him to? what? ſays God, *I will ſhow him what great things he muſt ſuffer for my name's ſake.* I verily believe, that if we were to have no other preferment than this of Paul, there is not one in a thouſand of the miniſters that would aſk for a living, if they knew they were to have ſuch poor wages as Paul had. Miniſters that hold the ſtandard up, muſt expect the enemy will fire on them from every quarter; and if they happen to be inſtrumental in comforting others, *with the ſame comforts wherewith they themſelves are comforted of God*, they muſt expect to bear their part, not only for their own purification, but for the benefit of thoſe to whom they miniſter; and I believe audiences find that miniſters miniſter beſt, and the bread comes beſt, when it comes out of the furnace of a miniſter's affliction.

The word affliction is of a very complex kind; it is like the word tribulation, which comes from the latin *tribulus*, ſignifying a

pricking thorn, a ſcratching briar, or wounding ſpikes concealed in the way; and the word affliction ariſes from a word that ſignifies ſomething that beats down, preſſes ſore, and is very grievous and tormenting; it is a word of ſo general import, that it takes in all the trouble we meet with from men, all the wounds we receive from enemies, as well as in the houſe of our friends; it takes in all our domeſtic trials, all our inward ſtruggles and dreadful temptations occaſioned by the fiery darts of a watchful devil; and if I am not miſtaken, when the great God ſaid, *I have choſen thee in the furnace of affliction*, it implys, that this is really to continue with us even to the very end of our days: this is what young converts, in the time of their firſt love, do not ſee; that is, do not wholly ſee it; for if young Chriſtians were to know all they have to ſuffer, it would dreadfully diſcourage them. God ſays, his people ſhall not do ſo and ſo, becauſe at their firſt ſetting out they would be diſheartned, and think of going back. It is our happineſs God lets us know our trials but very little before-hand, very little notice of them have we before the time, and then, perhaps, gives us but little reſpite; but O when one trial

trial is gone, God does with us as maſters do with their ſcholars, turns over a new leaf with us; and when one trial is over, teaches us another; hence our trials are not only new, but conſtant; hence many a believer is apt to ſay, *My trials riſe out of the ground*; and many believers are ſaying, who would have thought ſuch a trial would have befallen me at ſuch a time, from ſuch a hand? this may, perhaps, open to us a gloomy ſcene; it would be gloomy indeed, if we were not living in a ſtate of preparation; it would be gloomy indeed, if God was to afflict without a cauſe; but there is ſo much corruption, ſuch remainders of indwelling ſin, even in God's own children that are to ſtand neareſt to him in glory, that are the deareſt to him, and who are to be bleſſed with being in his boſom, that if God was not to ſend them afflictions, there is not a child of God but would overſet even with the comforts God vouchſafes to them. We find it ſo with our bodies, that if we live without exerciſe we are liable to have a variety of diſeaſes, we therefore ſubmit to various ways and means that a phyſician can preſcribe; and if the diſorders to which we are expoſed in our bodies, make us willing to ſubmit to a regimen preſcribed

ſcribed by a ſkilful phyſician, does it not follow by a parity of reaſoning, that we for our ſouls want ſometimes lenitives, and corroſives, and ſomething like a cauſtic to eat off the proud fleſh that cleaves to us? and it vindicates God's ways to man, that there is an hereafter appointed for us, that there is another world, to which, perhaps, we ſhall be called to go before the morning, *where the inhabitants ſhall no more ſay, I am ſick.* Believers know this, and if they cannot keep a ledger book, if they cannot poſt a merchant's book, they may learn ſo much of divine arithmetic, as to know that *the light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* The way to heaven, good biſhop Beveridge ſays, is narrow, but it is not long; the gates are ſtrait, but open to everlaſting life; and therefore *God has choſen us in the furnace of affliction*, becauſe if we were not afflicted, we ſhould never know what we were made of. Mr. Bohem, who was chaplain to the prince of Denmark, that was married to queen Anne, in one of his excellent ſermons upon affliction, has this obſervation, "Afflictions and temptations are like ſunbeams falling upon a dunghill; they do not bring

bring vapours into the dunghill, but they exhale the vapours." So afflictions do not bring the corruptions into us; we blame such and such a one for stirring up such and such corruptions in us, but these tend to draw out the vapours, and prepare us for the more lasting sunshine of a smiling God. God does not intend to destroy thee, but to refine thee, and to humble thee by it. The devil wants to sift thee as wheat; he thinks to let the grain go through the sieve, but Christ will only let the chaff fall through, and the sooner that is gone the better: so it is no ways derogatory to the honour of Christ, but agreeable to the state in which we are, agreeable to the state and the preparations to be made for eternity, agreeable to the militant disposition that our graces must retain. Hence our Lord was content to be called God's servant, *Behold my servant whom I have chosen, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth.—Though he was a son, he learned obedience by the things that he suffered*; he was made perfect by his sufferings. We cannot avoid trouble as men, as Christians we should not attempt it: *man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards*; and Christians, especially the man new-born. *If these things were done*

to

to the green tree, what ſhall be done to the dry? The croſs is the high-road to heaven, and ſo the king's highway: you know there is always a bar upon the king's road, the king has a particular road for himſelf; but the King of kings will make all bars to be removed, and then his people go the ſame road he himſelf went: this was the road of all the children of God; there is not an heir of God in heaven, but is now thanking God for his ſufferings here below; there is not a child of God ever received into glory, but, I believe, as ſoon as he comes there, is made to know why he met with ſuch a trial, and from ſuch a quarter; why he was under ſuch a rod, why under it ſo long; why it was ſhifted, why it was changed, why the whip ſometimes was turned to a ſcorpion, and the furnace heated ſeven times hotter; then the believer ſees the need of it: in heaven, it makes him wonder he was not afflicted ſeven times more on earth. I remember Virgil makes his hero in the Æneid to ſay, *'twould all end well**. He comforts himſelf with this conſideration under his trouble, that the diſcharge from it would be the better; and

* Dabit Deus his quoque finem,
Forſan et hæc olim meminiſſe juvabit,
Per varios caſus, per tot diſcrimina rerum,
Tendimus in Latium.

and if a child of God would think of that, hereafter he will look with pleaſure on what he ſuffered here; much more a Chriſtian enriched with the grace of God, will be willing to die when he conſiders he is hereafter to ſit in Abraham's boſom, and God ſays to him, *Remember thou in thy life-time received thy evil things.* O my brethren, a fine ſchool is the ſchool of Chriſt! I never knew any one of my acquaintance that were believers, and I have been acquainted with ſome theſe twenty-eight years laſt paſt, but what flouriſhed moſt under the afflicting hand of God. I believe if the devil had his will, he would bid too high for every believer; he does not love money; a covetous man is worſe than the devil, he loves that which the devil ſquanders away; but ſay they, we think we ſhould be very good if we had a coach and ſix; ſo when they have it, they think they are too good to go to that chapel or foundery; it was a good place when we walked a-foot, but now we have a coach we will drive by. Happy is it for us that we are choſen in the furnace of affliction; that is a glorious petition in our litany, *That in all time of our tribulation, good Lord deliver us!* You may very well excuſe me for preaching

from ſuch a text as this, becauſe I have been in the furnace, and I find it is very ſweet; it is very ſweet walking in a burning fiery furnace when the Son of God leads by the arm. In the account we have of the three children being in the fiery furnace, the king could ſay, *I ſee one walking with them:* what an emblem of the children of God! O, ſay you, does the Son of God walk with you in the furnace? I anſwer, yes; make the worſt of it, tell them the enthuſiaſt, the babler ſays, God walks with his people in the furnace; he walks with all that walk with him, and never walks cloſer with them than when they are in the furnace. Daniel is generally painted young, but he was four-ſcore years old when he was thrown in among the lions, there he ſits as ſweet and eaſy, and no lion dare to touch one of his grey hairs. Nothing proves the truth of grace, and ſhows the love of God more, and you may be aſſured of it as you are of being in this place alive, that ſanctified afflictions are the greateſt evidence God can give you of his love; ſo that if we are choſen in the furnace of affliction, we are to expect it; and is it not a great ſhame for us, that the heathens outdo us? when one came and told one of the heathens

heathens that his ſon, a darling ſon, was dead, he ſaid, "I know that I begot him mortal." So Job ſaid, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away.* O that God may bleſs this poor preaching to the raiſing up ſome drooping ſoul. Underneath thee, O believer, O ſufferer, are God's everlaſting arms; therefore *the beloved of the Lord ſhall dwell in ſafety*, becauſe they dwell near him, and *he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of God's eye.*

This may teach us, when one trouble is over to expect another; none of your requiems here. Abraham, I believe, thought when he had got his Iſaac, he was to be tried no more; but *after theſe things God did tempt Abraham.* We know not what trials we are to have, but remember they are marks of our adoption: not that all afflictions do prove us children of God, becauſe there are ſome afflictions that are not ſanctified: God give us all to have ſanctified afflictions!

If this is the caſe, let young believers know what they are to meet with; God forgive thoſe, and viſible churches are too much peſtered with them, that daub with untempered mortar: formerly, when the church was under perſecution, they would forſake father,

mother, and all; but *now, bleſſed be God, we are for becoming Chriſtians; we live in London, we live where the church is ſmiled upon, we may live where we are at eaſe.*—My dear hearers, do you think that all the Londoners are converted? do you think they all bring forth the fruits of the Spirit; or have you heard that the devil is converted? can any body prove to me that the devil is not the ſame; can you prove that God is not the ſame; can you prove that the world is not the ſame, that the human heart is not the ſame? if you can prove that neither of theſe are what they were when Chriſt came into the world, I will give up the point; but if they are the ſame, we muſt expect the ſame trials our forefathers met with, if ever we hope to meet with them in glory; *God forbid I ſhould glory, ſave in the croſs of Jeſus Chriſt.* Therefore, if any of us have a mind to ſet out for heaven, expect trouble. Indeed, if we have enliſted under the devil's banner, he ſhows you the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. When Peter ſaid to our Lord, concerning his ſufferings, *far be that from thee*; after having ſhown his diſpleaſure at it, as a ſuggeſtion of ſatan's, he ſays to all his diſciples, *If any man will come*

come after me, let him take up his croſs and follow me. And I remember Mr. Law, who was a great man, notwithſtanding ſome great blunders and miſtakes, told me thirty-two years ago, all principles, all doctrines, are comprehended in theſe few words, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf and take up his croſs and follow me.* And if you do not chuſe the furnace of affliction, if you are too nice to enter in, you forſake the Lord, and are only preparing to be company for the damned in hell. This was the caſe with Dives; *Son, thou in thy life-time received thy good things:* and for a man that fares ſumptuous every day; for a man that is cloathed in fine linen, to be tormented by the devil; to ſee God, Chriſt, heaven, with all he had, loſt; and the torments muſt never ceaſe. One moments thought of this is very awful! God grant this may not be the lot of any of us! Come, my dear hearers, may God of his infinite mercy grant this night, that ſome poor ſoul may be reſcued from the devil, and enliſt under Chriſt's banner! I have bore the croſs thirty-four years; I never wore it long, but I found to my great comfort it was lined with the love of God. *My yoke is eaſy, my burden*

burden is light, ſaith our bleſſed Lord. Suffering grace is given for ſuffering times; the reaſon we have not more comfort is, becauſe we have not more croſſes: happy they that ſay in this viſitation, my Jeſus, my Lord, I give up all for thee; my life, and all things, I caſt behind.

A heart that no deſire will move,
But ſtill to adore, obey, and love,
Give me, my Lord, my life, my all.

I wiſh you joy that run this courſe; don't be weary of it, don't think hard of God, don't ſay, never was any body tried as I am, never was any body tempted as I am, for if you was to go and tell your croſs, there are a thouſand in the congregation would, perhaps, ſay, dear I have had that and ten times worſe. One Mr. Buchanan, a Scotchman, who died the other day, having loſt his laſt child, ſaid, "I am now childleſs, but, bleſſed be God, I am not Chriſtleſs." A noble lady told me herſelf, that when ſhe was crying on account of one of her children's death, her little daughter came innocently to her one day and ſaid, "Mamma, is God Almighty dead, you cry ſo? the lady bluſhing, ſaid, no; ſhe replied, Madam, will you lend me your glove? ſhe let her take it,

and

and after that aſked for it again; upon which the child ſaid, Now you have taken the glove from me, ſhall I cry becauſe you have taken away your own glove? and ſhall you cry becauſe God has taken away my ſiſter." *Out of the mouths of babes has God perfected praiſe*, and will for ever. O glorify God in the furnace!

If any of you are ſaying, don't tell me of your afflictions, I will live, I will drink, *to-morrow ſhall be as to-day, and ſo much the more.* If there be any of you that ſay ſo, take care, take care, God himſelf can't iſſue out a worſe ſentence againſt you than this, *Let him alone, let him alone*; whom the Lord loves he chaſtens. What a pretty creature would you make in heaven, if you was to go there, without one of Chriſt's croſſes on your back, you would be turned out; no, there are none ſuch there.

Chriſtians endure the croſs; happy ye that are tried, and happy they that are gone to glory. Where is Mr. Middleton now? where is my dear fellow-labourer, that honeſt, that ſteady man of God? Oh! he was thanking God for the gout in his head, in his feet, in his ſtomach, all decays; thanking God for

that

that laſt trouble that cut the thread of life, and gave the ſoul a paſſage for heaven; if, in the midſt of that torture, he could anſwer his daughter and ſay, *heaven upon earth, heaven upon earth,* and went to heaven but a little after; now ſurely he muſt ſay, *heaven in heaven*; muſt he not now he ſees God, and ſees Chriſt? and by his comfort, though in ſuch great pain, it ſhows that God was kiſſing away his ſoul, he died at the very mouth of God. O may the bleſſed God bleſs his parents and children that are here to-night; I believe you may be glad that God has choſen him in the furnace of affliction. I am glad to hear that ſo many are deſirous that ſomething may be done for his family, and Mr. ——, and Mr. ——, and Mr. ——, are willing to take in the ſubſcriptions that any may be inclined to ſend them. May God bleſs the family, and grant that his children may not diſgrace the memory of their father; that they may live as followers of his faith, who is now gone to inherit the promiſes of God. You know not how your children may be left by you, though there is not one of you here but may be called that have children, to ſay, by and by my children muſt be left to the goodneſs of God; and it is a great

a great happineſs to ſee ſo many fatherleſs children provided for of late: there was never a time when perſons were more beneficent to the diſtreſſed; let it not be ſaid that believers in London live on bread alone, but may they be continuing to lay up treaſure in heaven! when we plead, not by way of merit, remember me, O Lord, I did ſo and ſo when others were in trouble. Lord Jeſus, I plead thy promiſes, if thou haſt choſen me in the furnace of affliction; O Lord, help me to lay hold on thee: O that this may be your and my lot. I am haſtning to the grave; I am aſtoniſhed that I have again an opportunity to preach the word of God. May God prepare us to follow thoſe that have gone before us, *where the wicked ceaſe from troubling*, and the weary ſoul enjoys everlaſting reſt with thee, O Father, with thee, O Son, and with the Holy Ghoſt; to whom, three perſons but one God, be all honour and glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

SERMON IX.

The Lord our Light.

ISAIAH lx. ver. 19, 20.

The ſun ſhall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightneſs ſhall the moon give light unto thee, but the Lord ſhall be unto thee an everlaſting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy ſun ſhall no more go down, neither ſhall thy moon withdraw itſelf, for the Lord ſhall be thine everlaſting light, and the days of thy mourning ſhall be ended.

UPON reading theſe words, I cannot help thinking of what the royal Pſalmiſt ſaid, *Glorious things are ſpoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.* I am afraid, my dear hearers, that even believers themſelves, who have taſted of the grace of God, reflect not and meditate as they ought, on the glorious and amazing felicity they are called

called by the Spirit of God to experience in this life. We content ourſelves too much with our hopes, and if we attain to *a good hope through grace*, we are ready to think we have got up to the laſt ſtep of the goſpel ladder, and have nothing more to do but to reſt in that hope, without ever attaining to an abiding, full aſſurance of faith. If we would examine the ſcriptures, and not chuſe to bring them down to us, but beg of God to raiſe our hearts up to them, we ſhall find the believer is made partaker of the grace of life, as well as an heir of it; the one is on earth, the other in heaven, and one is only a prelibation of the other. This bleſſed prophet Iſaiah, ſpeaking of the privileges of the children of God, ſaith, *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things that God hath prepared* (and that even here below) *for thoſe that love him:* God grant that we may be of that happy number! Hence, like an evangeliſt, the prophet draws aſide the veil, and as one inſpired by the Spirit of God, and filled with the rays of divine light, gives us a tranſporting view of the goſpel ſtate, and the glory which the church militant enjoys below, before its triumphant ſtate above.

The text, probably, refers to the great change that ſhould be made in the affairs of the Jews after their captivity, how wonderfully God would appear for them, after their harps had been long hanging on the willows, and they could make no other anſwer to their inſulting foes than this mournful one, *How can we ſing the Lord's ſong in a ſtrange land?* The goſpel is, doubtleſs, glad tidings of great joy; and however the people of God might be encouraged to hope that the time would come, when they ſhould tread on the necks of their enemies, the prophet teaches them to look further, and lets them know that their happineſs was not to conſiſt in any external created good, but in a larger poſſeſſion of the graces and comforts of the Holy Ghoſt. So that this chapter ſpeaks not only of a temporal deliverance and reſt, which they ſhould enjoy after their trouble, but a ſpiritual reſt, which, by faith, they ſhould enter into here, as the earneſt and pledge of the reſt and enjoyment of the better world hereafter. As we know no more of heaven than is diſcovered by the eye of faith, for even St. Paul acknowledges, that the things he ſaw were unutterable, 'tis obſervable that heaven in ſcripture is deſcribed

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to us more by what it is not, than by what it is. So in the words of the text, *Thy ſun ſhall no more go down, neither ſhall thy moon withdraw itſelf, for the Lord ſhall be thine everlaſting light, and the days of thy mourning ſhall be ended.* Here are three negatives, and but one poſitive, namely, *the Lord ſhall be thy everlaſting light*, which is a beautiful alluſion to the ſun, that ſhould teach us to ſpiritualize natural things; and if we feared God, and lived near to him as we ought, there is no object of our bodily eyes but might improve our ſpiritual ſight. You cannot ſuppoſe the prophet meant a time ſhould come, when the ſun ſhould not literally go down, that there ſhould not be night and day as now; God indeed permitted a man once to ſay, *ſun, ſtand thou ſtill*, and it was done; but, perhaps, there never will be any ſuch thing again till the ſun is removed from its ſtation, and the moon forſake her orbit, and be turned into blood. The word muſt therefore be underſtood in a figurative ſenſe; and then comparing ſpiritual things with ſpiritual, it muſt certainly import, that Jeſus Chriſt, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, ſhall be what the ſun is to the viſible world, that is, the light and life of all his people;

people; I ſay, all the people of God. You ſee now, the ſun ſhines on us all: I never heard that the ſun ſaid, Lord, I will not ſhine on the Preſbyterians, I will not ſhine on the Independants, I will not ſhine on the people called Methodiſts, thoſe great enthuſiaſts; the ſun never ſaid yet, I will not ſhine on the Papiſts; the ſun ſhines on all, which ſhows that Jeſus Chriſt's love is open to all that are made willing by the Holy Ghoſt to accept of him; and therefore it is ſaid, *the ſun of righteouſneſs ſhall ariſe with healing under his wings.* If you were all up this morning before the ſun aroſe at five o'clock, how beautiful was his firſt appearance! how pleaſant to behold the flowers opening to the riſing ſun! I appeal to you yourſelves, when you were looking out at window, or walking about, or opening your ſhop, if in a ſpiritual frame, whether you did not ſay, Ariſe thou ſun of righteouſneſs with healing under thy wings, on me. All that the natural ſun is to the world, Jeſus Chriſt is, and more, to his people; without the ſun we ſhould have no corn, or fruit of any kind: what a dark place would the world be without the ſun, and how dark would the world be without Jeſus Chriſt; and as the ſun does really

really communicate its rays to the earth, the plants, and to all this lower creation, ſo the Son of God does really communicate his life and power to every new created ſoul, otherwiſe Chriſt is but a painted ſun; and is Chriſt nothing but a painted Chriſt to us, while we receive heat and benefit by the Holy Ghoſt, on account of the virtue of his blood? Sometimes the ſun ſhines brighter than at other times, and does not always appear alike; clouds intervene and interrupt its rays; ſo it is between a renewed ſoul and the Lord Jeſus, the ſun of righteouſneſs; O my brethren, I believe you know it by fatal experience: hold but your hand now, when the ſun ſhines in its meridian, between it and you, and if by the breadth of that you can keep the ſun from you, ah! how very little earth will keep off thy heart from Jeſus Chriſt! It was a very excellent ſaying of one of the antients, that God never leaves a perſon till he firſt leaves him. Some people think God does ſo of his ſovereignty, but I am apt to think when the ſun ſhines, we ſhall find ſome people have taken up with ſomething ſhort of the ſun of righteouſneſs; and I believe there are times, when the poor believer thinks his ſun will quite go down, and riſe no more:

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he loſes his reliſh, his taſte and evidence of divine things; not only are the rays intercepted for a while, but doubts and fears, a dreadful cloud of them, come on. Though I hold with a full aſſurance of faith, yet I am of opinion that 'tis not always in a like exerciſe; and therefore pray that doubting people will not take hold of that, and ſay, Bleſſed be God, I am in a doubting ſtate, and I am content. The Lord deliver you from a mind to ſtay in priſon, and prevent the devil from locking the door upon you, and keeping you there as long as he can. The Lord help you to come; come, come, and break out of priſon, that you may know how pleaſant it is to behold the Sun, and praiſe his name.

Sometimes, inſtead of the ſun there is only moon-light, which ſhews the difference a believer feels in his ſoul, both in relation to grace and comfort. Both ſun and moon give light, but O how far ſuperior is the one to the other: the moon gives a very faint, uncertain light, waxes and wanes, and at beſt is almoſt nothing when compared with the light, and the bleſſed reviving heat of the ſun. Hence, my brethren, this world ſometimes is a world of mourners: it is ſaid, *that the days of our mourn-*

mourning ſhall be ended; for if the text refers to the future ſtate, as no doubt it does, it means that the days of believers here below are very often mournful, trying, and afflicting, though they end in joy, as our Lord intimates in his opening his goſpel-ſermon almoſt with theſe very words, *Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted.* Some, perhaps, may think it is an odd kind of bleſſing; and though worldly people are fond of the fifth of Matthew, and wonder that Methodiſts and goſpel-miniſters do not preach oftner on that chapter, I am apt to believe, when you come to preach and open that word, they will not like that chapter any more than any other, becauſe they are for a joyful Chriſt, and not for any mourning at all. Do you know God in Chriſt? let me tell you, the more you are acquainted with him, the more your ſouls will be kept in a mourning ſtate. A mournful ſtate!—O, ſay you, people will mourn before they are converted.—Ah, that they will.—I don't love to hear of converſions without any ſecret mourning; I ſeldom ſee ſuch ſouls eſtabliſhed. I have heard of a perſon who was in company once with fourteen miniſters of the goſpel, ſome of whom were eminent ſervants

of Chriſt, and yet not one of them could tell the time God firſt manifeſted himſelf to their ſoul. Zaccheus's was a very quick converſion, perhaps not a quarter of an hour's conviction: this I mention, that we may not condemn one another. We do not love the pope, becauſe we love to be popes ourſelves, and ſet up our own experience as a ſtandard to others. Thoſe that had ſuch a converſion as the jaylor, or the Jews: O, ſay you, we do not like to hear you talk of ſhaking over hell, we love to hear of converſion by the love of God; while others that were ſo ſhaken, as Mr. Bolton and other eminent men were, may ſay, you are not Chriſtians becauſe you had not the like terrible experience. You may as well ſay to your neighbour, you have not had a child, for you were not in labour all night. The queſtion is, whether a real child is born, not how long was the preceding pain, but whether it was productive of a new birth, and whether Chriſt has been formed in your hearts; it is the birth proves the reality of the thing.

Some allow that there is mourning before, but no mourning after converſion; pray who ſays ſo? none but an Antinomian, a rank Antinomian; and when you hear a perſon ſay, that

that after converſion you will have no mourning, you may be aſſured that perſon is at beſt walking by moon-light; he does not walk by the ſun, he has got ſome doctrine in his head, but very little grace, I am afraid, in his heart. How! how! my brethren, not mourn after we are converted; why, till then there is no true mourning at all. The damned in hell are mourning now, they put on their mourning as ſoon as they get there. How am I tormented in this flame, ſays Dives; and Cain, my puniſhment is greater than I can bear. How many worldly people break their hearts for the loſs of the world: they cannot keep their uſual equipage, nor do as they would; and come not to worſhip on Sunday, becauſe they cannot appear ſo fine as formerly they did: this is a ſorrow of the world that worketh death; but there is a bleſſed, a more evangelical mourning, which is the habitual, bleſſed ſtate and frame of a converted ſoul. How ſtrong the expreſſion, *They ſhall look on him whom they have pierced, and ſhall mourn:* how ſhall they mourn? *as one mourneth for a firſt-born, an only child.* Have you ever been called to bury a child? is there any tender mother here? were you merry directly after

the child was dead? no, perhaps till this very day, you continually call to remembrance your little one and ſhed a tear; every thing relating to it, cauſes the repetition of your ſorrow. When a poor believer is acquainted with Jeſus Chriſt, he mourns for having crucified the Son of God, and you will mourn for the ſame ſin after converſion as before. Surely, ſays ſome, I mourn for my ſins I committed before my converſion. I do not know whether you do or no, but I know you ſhould. O, ſays David, *Remember not againſt me the ſins of my youth*, in a Pſalm which was wrote when he was an old man; and Paul ſays, *I was a blaſphemer and injurious, and therefore not worthy to be called an apoſtle, becauſe I perſecuted the church of God*; and this after he had been wrapped up to the third heaven. See Mary ruſhing into the houſe, waſhing her Lord's feet with her tears, and wiping them with her hair: I don't ſuppoſe ſhe was dreſſed as our ladies are now; they did not make ſuch apes of themſelves; but her hair was very fine in an honeſt way: though ſhe breaks the allibaſter box of ointment given her, perhaps by ſome poor ſilly creature that would die by her frowns, and live upon her ſmiles, ſee her at the feet of her

her Saviour; and Jeſus Chriſt anſwers for her, ſome having thought ſhe was profuſe, that having had much forgiven, ſhe loved much. The more the love of God is manifeſted, the more it will melt the ſoul down: I appeal to you Chriſtians, whether the ſweeteſt times you ever enjoyed, were not thoſe when you were much melted at the ſight of a crucified Saviour; when you could ſay, Lord, thou forgaveſt me, I feel it, I know it, but I cannot forgive myſelf; this will always be the effect of an ingenuous mind; and a perſon that is really converted will thus mourn, and if you do not know this, you may be aſſured you know nothing ſavingly of Jeſus Chriſt. You may go and hear this and that warning, and you are right to gather honey from every flower, but you have not got within the inner court, but are yet without. God give you to ſee your folly herein.

A true believer will mourn over his corruptions: I wonder what they can think, who ſuppoſe they have no corruptions. I remember a poor creature of Rhode-Iſland, who looked the moſt like the old Puritans I ever ſaw, when I was talking with him, and ſaid, ſome people ſay there are ſome men that have no

no ſin; he ſaid, if you ſend ſuch a man to me, I will pay his charges even from England and back again. I have often learned ſomething from the difference of glaſſes: you look into the common glaſſes, and ſee yourſelves there ſo fine, and admire your perſon, dreſs, &c. but when you view yourſelves through a microſcope, how many worms are diſcovered in that fine ſkin of yours, enough to make you aſhamed of the vermin and filth that is ſeated there: ſo it is in faith, that glaſs would ſhow you ſo much corruption cleaving to every action of your lives, that would make you ſinſick, and mourn that you have known God ſo long, and are like him ſo little. What ſays Paul? *Who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* Notwithſtanding he knew that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus*, yet cries out, *O wretched man that I am!* I ſhould have thought, O happy man that thou art! formerly a perſecutor, and now a preacher; a man that has been honoured ſo much above every man in planting churches, which is the higheſt honour a man can have under heaven; here is a man that hath been wrapt up to the third heaven,—what of him? *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver*

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me from this body of ſin and death? Do you think that it was only a little qualm of conſcience? no, it was the habitual temper of his heart. Some people are much humbled by fits and ſtarts, but Paul felt this daily: many things that we are not concerned about, Paul looked upon them as ſuch that made his heart ach, becauſe he thought he could not live near enough to God. He not only watched to do good, but he watched how he did that good; and nature was ſo mixed with it, that he ſaid, I cannot do as I would do, I would have ſerved God like an angel, but I find myſelf to be a poor ſinner after all; and if we are like-minded with Paul, we ſhall mourn over our corruptions, we ſhall mourn over our hidden ſins that none know but God and ourſelves. It is a very dangerous thing to truſt goſpel-goſſips, who being ſtrangers to themſelves, hear with wonder and contempt, and often betray; however, a judicious friend, into whoſe boſom we can pour out our ſouls, and tell our corruptions as well as our comforts, is a very great privilege. When our corruptions do not drive us from Chriſt, but drive us to him, it is the greateſt bleſſing to commune with Chriſt on this ſide heaven: and, my brethren,

brethren, if your hearts are right with God, you will ſee ſuch things as nobody elſe could think of. A good woman, who was charmed with Dr. Manton, ſaid, O, ſir, you have made an excellent ſermon to-day, I wiſh I had your heart; do you ſo, ſaid he, good woman, you had better not wiſh for it, for if you had it, you would wiſh for your own again. The beſt of men ſee themſelves in the worſt light.

How many thouſand things are there that make you mourn here below! who can tell the tears that godly parents ſhed for ungodly children! O you young folks, you don't know what plague your children may be to you! O they are pretty things while young, like rattle-ſnakes and alligators, which I have ſeen when little, but put them in your boſom and you will find they are dangerous. How many are there in the world that would wiſh, if it were lawful, that God had written them childleſs: there is many a poor creature that makes his father's heart ach. I once aſked a godly widow, madam, how is your ſon; ſhe turned aſide with tears, and ſaid, ſir, he is no ſon to me now. What in the world can come up to that! here, ſays one, I have bred up my children, I cannot charge myſelf with educating them

them wrong, though few parents can ſay that, for many parents lead them into the paths of death, and ſo are murderers of their own children, and by their manner of education help to damn them for ever; but if you can ſay, I have done all I could, and yet, O my God, my children are worſe than any other peoples; this is a dreadful ſtate indeed; and the more you mourn, the more they laugh at you; O theſe are my godly parents. They increaſe their trouble, like Dr. Horneck's ſon, who ſaid, *There is not a poſt in my father's houſe but ſtinks of piety.* I once ſaw a man that was awakened at the Orphan-houſe, fall down and throw himſelf on one of their beds, crying out, O, ſir, what will become of my poor grey-headed father, who knows nothing of this birth! It is a difficulty with ſome to know how to behave towards unconverted relations; if you don't go to them, they will ſay you are preciſe; if you do, and are faithful, they will ſoon ſhow you they have enough of your company: this ſends a godly perſon home mourning; and then there comes a thought, ſhall I ſpeak to them any more, or let them go to the devil. This is not like parting from your friends by death, but burying them alive:

when dead, we know we muſt ſubmit, but to part from friends, thoſe we loved, and thought to have lived with till we came to heaven, is mournful indeed.

Moreover, the poor ſtate of the church makes many a miniſter and cloſe-walker with God to weep over the deſolations of the ſanctuary, and to mourn for thoſe that will not mourn for themſelves: thus our Lord wept over Jeruſalem, *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens,* but it is over with thee now; the decree is gone forth, and Jeruſalem ſhall ſuffer.

Brethren, the time will fail, and therefore I leave it to you to ſupply more caſes; for if I was to preach till to-morrow morning, I doubt not but a thouſand here would ſay, there are many things you have not mentioned yet. You know the ſtate of your own hearts, and the many particular trials in your own caſe; and you may alſo know, though your trial ſeems over, it is only changed: but let it be obſerved, the day of your mourning ſhall be ended; mind, it is but days, though ſometimes made very ſad ones indeed, by the neglect and ingratitude of thoſe who have made the

the people of God ſerve them with rigour, as though all the world was made for them, as well as their incapacity to help themſelves, by poverty, pain, ſore ſickneſſes, and of long continuance. This has been, and is the lot of many a child of God; bleſſed be ſovereign mercy, 'tis but a few days. An end ſhall arrive, and that end ſhall be happy, when death, the believer's friend, ſhall come with an angel's face, to diſmiſs them from all their ſin and ſorrow. When I was laſt at Briſtol, I could not help remembring good Mr. Middleton, who uſed you know to have the gout very much, and in that cloſet were kept his crutches: now, thought I, he needs them no more, the days of his mourning are ended, and ſo ſhall ours by and by too, when we ſhall no longer want our ſpiritual crutches or armour, but ſhall ſay to the helmet of hope, the ſhield of faith, I have no more need of thee; and the all-prevailing weapon of prayer be changed into ſongs of endleſs praiſe; when God himſelf ſhall be our everlaſting light, a ſun that ſhall never go down more, but ſhall beam forth his infinite and eternal love in a beatific ſtate for ever. The proſpect of this made one of the fathers cry out, O glory! how great! how

great! what art thou? a friend aſking him what he ſaw? he anſwered, I ſee the glory of the only begotten Son of God. And if a ſight of Chriſt on earth is ſo great, as could make good Mr. Wardrobe, an excellent Scotch miniſter ſay, after he was given over, ſtarting up in the arms of an excellent friend who told it me, in a rapture of joy, crowns! crowns! crowns of glory ſhall adorn this head of mine e're long! and ſtretching up, added, ſtars! ſtars! ſtars ſhall e're long fill theſe hands of mine! and ſo ſweetly fell aſleep in Jeſus: what a pleaſing, awful trial is that for an affectionate friend! So our dear ſiſter, who is to be buried to-morrow night at Tottenham-court, talked with her friends for an hour or two, and took leave of her huſband and children, and ſaid, Now come, ye heavenly chariots! We ſhall thank God then for all our loſſes, croſſes, and diſappointments; and I believe thoſe things which we mourn for moſt, and put us moſt to the trial, will give us moſt comfort when we come to die: God ſhall be our everlaſting light, as well as the days of our mourning ſhall be ended.

Take care, don't be ſecure, pray don't think the day of your mourning to be ended yet;

yet: you may put off mourning for your friends, but may have freſh cauſe of mourning for your ſouls; whilſt you remember that holy mourning is conſiſtent with holy walking, following the Lord in all his ways. You have often heard me ſpeak of one of our miniſters, who was not one of your fine velvet mouths, that ſaid once in the pulpit, As ſure as you ſee the ſun ſhine on my breaſt, which at that time it did, ſo ſure does the Spirit of God dwell in the ſouls of true believers. How often has he told you, *I am for having you have godly ſorrow, I wiſh your hearts were full of it, becauſe it will end in everlaſting joy.* Comfort, my brethren, one another with theſe things, the day of your mourning ſhall ſoon be ended for ever.

But what am I to ſay? I apprehend I ſhall grow forgetful to-night;—I have ſpoken ſo much to ſaints, I am afraid I ſhall have but little time to ſpeak to ſinners: I mean, I have taken ſo much time up in ſpeaking to you that know God, that I have but little to ſpeak to you that know him not. How different your ſtate, poor hearts! poor hearts! my ſoul mourns for you; my blood, whilſt I am ſpeaking, is ready to curdle in my veins. The ſeraphic

raphic Mr. Hervey, when he did me that honour to ſojourn under my roof, ſaid, My dear friend, it is an awful thing when we ſee an unconverted man die, and his eyes cloſed, to think that that poor ſoul will never ſee one gleam of comfort or life more; to have a ſight of God, of Chriſt, and the heavenly angels and ſaints; but to ſee what the rich man ſaw, a God they want; to ſee Lazarus, whom he would not permit to be ſeen at his door, now taken particular notice of in heaven; and to ſee himſelf now a beggar in hell. The Lord help you to think! O think how ſoon your ſun will go down, and even your bodies will feel damnation, not only in reſpect to pain, but loſs.

Biſhop Uſher's opinion was, and I heartily concur in it, that thoſe who value themſelves moſt on their beauty and dreſs, and do not love God on earth, will be moſt deformed in hell, and their bodies ſuffer proportionally there. There is no dreſſing in hell, nothing but fire and brimſtone there, and the wrath of God always awaiting on thee, O ſinner, whoever thou art, man or woman. It was a fine ſaying of Maclane, who was executed ſome years ago, when the cap was pulling over his eyes,

eyes, Muſt I never ſee the light of yon ſun any more; Lord Jeſus Chriſt, thou ſun of righteouſneſs, ariſe with healing under thy wings on my departing ſoul! May the Lord Jeſus Chriſt do that for us all! When you are damned, the days of your mourning will be but at their beginning; there is no end of your mourning in hell. There is but one ſong, if it may be called ſo, in hell, to wit, that of Dives, which will be always repeating, *How am I tormented in this flame!* Conſider this, ye that forget God; and O that God may bleſs you to-night with godly ſorrow. Believers, pray for them: Lord help you, ſinners, to pray for your vile ſelves. Some may think, what do you cry for? why, I cry for you. Perhaps you will ſay as a wicked one did to a poor woman in Scotland, when thouſands were awakened there; ſeeing her weep, he ſaid, what do you weep for? for this people, ſays ſhe; weep for yourſelf, ſays he; ſhe replied, I do; but what is my ſoul, to all theſe poor ſouls! O that miniſters may never riſe up in judgment againſt you: O may Moſes, in the hand of the Spirit, make you mourn! may the love of God make you cry! may you not go home to-night without

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an arrow ſteeped in the blood of Chriſt. It was wonderful what a good woman awaking thought ſhe ſaw written over her head, *O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord!* May every earthly ſoul be made to hear it; to awake, ariſe from their ſleep in ſin. The ſun is going down, and death may put an end to all to-night: the Lord help you to come, though it is the eleventh hour: O that you would fly, fly this night to Chriſt, leſt God deſtroy you for ever. Jeſus ſtands ready with open arms to receive you whom he has firſt pricked to the heart, and made you cry out, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved!* he will then make you believe in his name, that you may be ſaved: God grant this may be the caſe of all here to-night. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON X.

Self-Enquiry concerning the Work of God.

NUMBERS xxiii. ver. 23.

According to this time it ſhall be ſaid of Jacob and of Iſrael, what hath God wrought?

WHEN I read you, my dear hearers, theſe words; when I conſider what occaſion, and by whom they were originally ſpoke, I can't help thinking of that triumphant expreſſion of the royal Pſalmiſt, *Why do the Heathen rage?* When Pontius Pilate and the Jews conſpire to deſtroy the cauſe of God, *he that ſitteth in heaven laughs them to ſcorn; the Lord not only has them in deriſion,* but over-rules even their malice and violence (no thanks to them) to promote that very cauſe they attempted to deſtroy; ſo that 'tis a very wrong maxim, and argues great ignorance in us, to imagine that God never

brings about his deſigns by the means and inſtrumentality of wicked men. This is the Papiſts objection againſt the reformation: great pains have been taken to blacken the reformers, and to make it believed that a reformation could not be good that was begun by people of bad character, and a king of an immoral life. But ſo far is this from eclipſing, that it illuſtrates the wiſdom and goodneſs of divine Providence, in obliging the wicked to do what they never deſigned, and over-ruling their counſels for the fulfilling God's holy, wiſe, and ſovereign decree. This obſervation naturally ariſes from the words of our text, which were ſpoken by, as far as I can judge, one of the vileſt men upon the earth, you doubtleſs know his name, Balaam, who, though florid in his expreſſions, and high in profeſſion of intercourſe with God, and puts on a fine face of religion, was but a rotten-hearted hypocrite, for he divined for money, made a trade of religion; and ſo loved the wages of unrighteouſneſs, as to have wiſhed to curſe even thoſe whom God had bleſſed. I need not inform you, that this was the end for which Balak ſent for him; and no wonder he was ſo willing to go, when he knew he was to be well paid

paid for his journey. Achilles, the Græcian hero, is ſaid to be capable of being wounded only in the heel, but bad prieſts, miniſters, and people, have a great deal more dangerous part to be wounded in, that is, the palm of the hand; if you can keep that ſecure from being wounded with gold, never fear; the devil can't have his end. Balak promiſed him great preferment, if he would but come and curſe the people of God. A prophet, or ſoothſayer, is one that pretends to have intercourſe with God or the devil, and Balak did not care by which of them it was, ſo that he could but get the Iſraelites curſed; Balaam catches at the golden bait, pretends to aſk counſel of God; and what ſeems ſtrange, God bids him go, and yet ſends an angel to meet him in the way, who ſtands ready to ſlay him for going. Does it not ſeem very ſtrange, that God ſhould bid a man go, and then offer to ſlay him for going; but people that read this paſſage, ſhould carefully mind the particulars of it. God ſaid, if the men come and call thee, go; but he did not wait for that, but ſaddles his aſs and goes: this is called by St. Peter, the madneſs of the prophet: witneſs his riſing early in the morning, not waiting for

the call of the princes, which ſhewed how eager he was to be gone; and though this ſolution ſhould not be allowed, God was juſtly angry for his going with an ill deſign, that is, maliciouſly to curſe a people whom he knew God reſolved ſhould be bleſſed, and that for the ſake of the wages of unrighteouſneſs *. The king and his nobles wait upon him, in hopes this ſoothſayer will anſwer their purpoſe; but after all he can do nothing without God's leave: however, no coſt is ſpared to obtain the end; ſo true is it, that the devil's children are ten thouſand times more expenſive in perſecuting the people of God, than God's people are in promoting his glory. This ſoothſaying prieſt pretends to go to God, which is permitted, but forced to ſpeak what God would have him; once and again his mouth is ſtopped, or rather his curſes are ſtopped, and turned into a bleſſing. Balak, enraged at his repeated diſappointment, bids him neither to curſe or bleſs them at all; and thinking, perhaps, that the ſight of the people affected him,

* It is no unuſual thing in holy writ, for heaven to reſent and puniſh even thoſe actions that it has permitted. Witneſs Deut. i. 20—35. comp. with Numb. xiii. 2.—Hoſ. xiii. 11. comp. with 1 Sam: viii. 7. cap. xv. 23. cap. xvi. 1. Pſal. 81. 11, 12. &c. &c.

him, carries him to a place where he would ſee but a ſmall part of them; he goes, and there God made him confirm the bleſſing inſtead of the curſe, more abundantly than before. Oratory is beautiful, though out of the mouth of the worſt of men, *Surely*, ſaid he, *there is no enchantment againſt Jacob, neither is there any divination againſt Iſrael. Behold, the people ſhall riſe up as a great lion, and lift up himſelf as a young lion; he ſhall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the ſlain*; having ſaid juſt before, *According to this time it ſhall be ſaid of Jacob and Iſrael, what hath God wrought!*

What words are here out of the mouth of a wicked man! and yet I hope it will do no hurt to chuſe them as a proper ſubject for an evening meditation. Let us leave this prophane diviner, and the king his employer, vexed that they could not get their end of the people of God: let us ſnatch the words out of the vile prophet's mouth, and ſee if we can ſerve him as David did Goliah, take his ſword and cut off his head. Some people run to extreams, and becauſe ſome have abuſed religion, therefore they think there is no religion at all. Perhaps it is for this reaſon, that ſo many offences

offences are permitted to happen in the churches, that one of the twelve ſhould be a traitor, and that the devil ſhould come with his bible under his arm to tempt us to diſbelieve or abuſe it, by which God ſtirs up the people of God to watch, fight, and pray.

How ſhould we take the words of our text? by way of interrogation? or admiration? as ſpeaking in a prophetic ſtrain how God had wrought, and did then work, and would afterwards work for the proſperity of his faithful Jacob and his poſterity, the Iſrael of God.

Suppoſe we take them in the way of queſtion, which, perhaps, is moſt agreeable to the context, and it may be moſt ſerviceable to you and to me; and in order that I may not run into too great a field to-night, I will confine myſelf to what Balaam confines himſelf, *from this time it ſhall be ſaid of Jacob and Iſrael*, in a way of enquiry, *what hath God wrought?*

If we look round the world and ſurvey the works of creation, *the heavens declare God's glory: and the firmament ſheweth his handy work.* If we look further, my brethren, down upon theſe bodies of ours, if we conſider the curious form of them, we may cry, *what hath*

hath God wrought! ſurely I am fearfully and wonderfully made; and when we conſider that we are made up of the four elements; when we conſider to what caſualties we are expoſed, how wonderfully theſe bodies have been kept up, when thouſands have dropped into the grave before us, we may well ſay, *what hath God wrought!* but I rather chuſe to confine myſelf to that better part; and I am perſuaded of it, we ſhall never go to heaven unleſs God works powerfully on our ſouls: ſuppoſing you and I now were to forget all created beings, ſuppoſing we were to forget our neighbours to-night, and to hear only for ourſelves, as the ſhades of the evening are coming on, and as we are going ſhortly to reſt, may be to riſe no more in this lower world, what if we ſhould ſteal a little time from our ſhop, a little time from our worldly buſineſs, as we know not but we may be called to judgment to-morrow, and aſk and ſay, O my ſoul, what hath God wrought in thy heart? I am glad to hear you are ſo inquiſitive. Obſerve, what hath God wrought; now whatever is done in us, is all done by God; it is all done by an Almighty power, and it is all the effect of infinite wiſdom; ſuppoſing then you and I are new creatures,

tures, hath God, O my ſoul, wrought in thee a deep, a penitent, a humbling ſenſe of thy tranſgreſſions againſt his holy law; this is a moſt important queſtion, this is the very beginning of religion, this is the very firſt letter of the Chriſtian's alphabet, the firſt line in his book; with this Chriſt himſelf began to teach fallen man. *Adam, where art thou,* was the firſt queſtion that the Son of God put to his fallen creatures; what condition art thou in? how art thou fallen, thou ſon of the morning! and when he came to the woman, he took the ſame way, he preached, and miniſters ſhould preach conviction firſt; *what is this,* ſaith God, *that thou haſt done?* to break thy huſband, and bring all thy poſterity unto ruin; and it ſeems to me that there was a conſciouſneſs in this; and I wonder ſometimes, the Deiſts have not run ſo far as to do it in jeſt. I don't know that I ever heard of a female child's name called Eve; probably, we are aſhamed to call a child by that name, becauſe of the guilt of our mother Eve, that brought us all into ſin. Now hath God wrought in you? hath he even given this conviction to you; not a little flight now and then, or a qualm of thy conſcience; the devil and natural

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conſcience may do this; but when it is wrought in thy heart by the Spirit of God, it goes to the bottom, the arrow ſticks faſt, and a poor ſoul ſometimes endeavours to pray, endeavours to pull it out, but in vain. Hath God wrought this in thy ſoul? now when God works this change in the ſoul, the devil is always buſy in tempting the poor convicted ſinner to deſpond, if not deſpair. Ignorant formaliſts, who are ſome of the worſt people under heaven, when a perſon is under conviction, think the devil is got into them, whereas the devil is in themſelves; for the devil hoodwinks people, and he endeavours to perſuade them, that there is no harm done to God by ſinning againſt him. It is God wounds the ſoul, and it is he that heals it; has he wrought in thee not only a deep and humbling ſenſe of the outward acts of ſin, but a humbling ſenſe of the inward corruptions of thy heart? has he led thee beyond the ſtreams, through the powerful operations of his Spirit, to the fountain-head? when he has done ſo, then are we Chriſtians indeed; and this cannot be the work of the devil, who never did, nor do I know whether he can, ſhow a perſon the inward corruptions of his heart; it muſt be the Spirit of God: the devil

may frighten a perſon, as to outward things, but I very much queſtion whether it is in the power or will of the devil to ſhow a perſon that he is totally depraved, that the whole fountain is corrupt; this cannot be, becauſe this would make the devil omnipotent, of equal power with the Holy Ghoſt, who alone ſhows thee the guilt and corruption of thy heart. This I have found to be the fact, from thirty years obſervation and experience of thouſands, thouſands, thouſands, with whom I have ſpoken about their hearts. So it was, I remember, when I went firſt to Georgia, when I was about twenty-five years old, I had them day after day, week after week, and night after night, ſaying, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* O my wicked heart, my deceitful heart, from morning to night. Hath God wrought this in any of you? are you complaining of your wicked heart and corrupt nature? have you found out that your hearts are cages of unclean birds, only a lodging for vain thoughts to dwell in? O my friends, my dear hearers, O may you turn the queſtion into a note of admiration, and ſay, *what hath God wrought!* he has not only convinced me of my outward ſins, but powerfully convinced

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me of the corruptions of my heart. Do aſk yourſelves this queſtion, has God wrought in me a view of the ſpirituality of his holy law? till this is done, you are as faſt in the devil's arms as he can claſp you. Of all the children the devil has in the world, I believe he moſtly loves his Phariſaical children: I was talking with one of them ſome time ago, and ſomebody very innocently aſked me where the Phariſees lived, O, ſaid I, they live every where. Some people think that they only lived in the times of the apoſtles. Do you know, vipers and toads have the moſt eggs and moſt numerous progeny? if you was to ſee the eggs of a toad through a microſcope, you would wonder at the innumerable multitude; and the Phariſees are an increaſing generation of vipers, which hatch and ſpread all over the world: if you want to know what a Phariſee is, he is one who pretends to endeavour, and talks about keeping the law of God, and does not know its ſpirituality; they are ſome of them very great men in their own opinion, and always made the greateſt figure in the church: one of them, a gentleman's ſon, becauſe he had not broke the letter of the law, thought he was right and without

ſin; O, ſays he, if I have nothing elſe to do but to keep the commandments, I am ſafe; I have honoured my father and mother; I never ſtole; what need he ſteal that had ſo good an eſtate? I never committed adultery; no, no, he loved his character too well: but our Lord opens to him the law, *this one thing thou lackeſt, go ſell all thou haſt*; he loved his money more than his God: Chriſt brought him back to the firſt commandment, though he catechized him firſt in the fifth. So Paul was a Phariſee; he ſays, *I was alive without the law once*; *I was, touching the law, blameleſs*; how can that be, can a man be without the law, and yet, touching the law, blameleſs; ſays he, *I was without the law*; that is, I was not brought to ſee the ſpirituality of it; I thought myſelf a very good man, no man could ſay of Paul, black is his eye; but, ſaith he, when God brought the commandment with power upon my ſoul, then I ſaw my ſpecks, and do now. Pray mind and ſay the commandments, if you go to church you ſee them, and if you go to meeting I hope you have not forgot them; *thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs againſt thy neighbour, thou ſhalt not covet*; from repeating the laſt commandment, we

we are taught that God's law is ſpiritual, *I ſhould not have known ſin*, as the apoſtle ſaid, *if the law had not ſaid, thou ſhalt not covet*; now has God wrought in you theſe things? haſt thou really ſeen his law that it is ſpiritual? have you been made to ſee that the law of God requires perfect, ſinleſs obedience? have you been made to ſee that you are under the curſe, becauſe you have ſinned, by the inward teaching of the bleſſed Spirit of God? for then be aſſured, as ſure as thou art in this place, God has wrought this in thy ſoul, and thou mayſt turn the queſtion to admiration, and ſay, *what has God wrought!* has he wrought in thee a ſenſe of unbelief, that thou canſt no more believe than thou canſt create a world? I mention this, becauſe I have told you often, and I am in the ſame mind; yet there are very few books that talk about unbelief, there is a long catalogue of ſins, but not one word about unbelief; why? O becauſe theſe good folks, that have wrote communion books, take it for granted, all folks that go to church are believers; I take it there are more unbelievers in the church than out of it; why, ſay you, do not they aſſent to the goſpel? ſo does the devil; do not they aſſent to all the articles of the Chriſtian

Chriſtian faith? ſo does the devil; the devil is a ſtronger believer than an Arian; the devil is a ſtronger believer than a Socinian, he believes Chriſt is God, for he has felt his power by his damning him to hell; *we know thee who thou art, the holy one of God.* But remember Chriſt ſays, when he is gone the Spirit of God ſhall come to reprove the world, in the margin it is, convince, and not a tranſient conviction, but a conviction that faſtens, that brings ſalvation with it; if conviction brings its own evidence, ſurely faith muſt bring its own evidence along with it too; *now he ſhall convince the world,* ſaith our Lord, *of ſin*; what ſin? the ſin of unbelief, *becauſe they believe not in me.* It is mentioned by the dear Mr. Hervey, by the dear Mr. Marſhall himſelf, and alſo by ſomebody elſe, that when complaining to a miniſter that he could get no eaſe to his ſoul, and told the miniſter he confeſſed his ſins every day, he put them all down, (a man muſt have a good memory that can do that) the miniſter ſaid to him, I think your catalogue is worth nothing at all, the grand ſin is not mentioned; what is that? ſir, ſaid he, the ſin of unbelief, a ſin the poor creature thought he had never been guilty of. Has God wrought

wrought in thee a ſenſe of thy unbelief? what bleſſed times have I ſeen in New, as well as Old England and Scotland, when thouſands were awakened at Edinburgh, at Glaſgow, and many other places, when I have ſeen them taken out of the congregation by ſcores, and aſked what is the matter? what do you want? I can't believe! I can't believe! I can't believe! We think we can believe when we will, but the Spirit alone can convince us we have no faith, the Spirit alone can convince us of our want of faith, and can alone impart it to the poor awakened ſinner; conſequently, you may aſk yourſelves whether God has wrought in you, not only a ſenſe of your own miſery, but alſo a ſenſe of your remedy; ſet you upon hungering and thirſting, ſuch a hungering and thirſting as has never been ſatisfied but by an application of the blood of Chriſt imputed to you. I do not want to diſpute upon the ſcriptures with any body: there are a great many good men have been prejudiced by Antinomian principles and practices, and becauſe ſome people have run to a dangerous extream, and have not thought proper to make uſe of the word *imputed* at all. The beſt truth may be ſpoiled by bad books; but, for my part, I

am

am more than ever convinced, that the doctrine of imputed righteouſneſs is a doctrine of the goſpel; and that as Adam's ſin is imputed to me, ſo the righteouſneſs of Chriſt muſt be imputed alſo: I ſtand not only as a pardoned ſinner, but as a juſtified ſinner; I ſtand before God juſtified, and ſo do all whom Jeſus Chriſt has purchaſed. Now has God wrought this in thee, O man; in thee, O woman? I am not going to aſk, whether it was wrought in thee by hearing a ſermon or reading a book, God may make uſe of a miniſter, or of a book; and I don't like people to get above miniſters and books, ſaying, we do not want theſe. God draws with the cords of a man, and generally draws us with cords by men ſuch as ourſelves. Canſt thou ſay, there is a book, there is the miniſter, in reading or hearing which, Chriſt's blood was applied, and the Spirit of God witneſſed with my ſpirit that I was one of his children? now this is all God's working, indeed it is, the devil can't do this, it is out of his power; he may attempt to perſuade them that he has done it, when he has not, and cannot. The magicians turned their rods into ſerpents, but the rod of Jehovah ſwallowed them all up. Has the Lord God wrought

a change

a change of heart in thee, and a change of life as a conſequence of that; I mention this, but I would have every body that ſtands up for Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs, eſpecially as ſome good people are apt to ſpeak of it and carry it very high, to be careful in the ſame diſcourſe to ſpeak as highly of obedience too, to Chriſt's commandments. I don't like only to mention the word promiſes; when people tell me they hang upon the promiſes, I always aſk them how do you hang upon them? have you got the thing promiſed? the promiſe is, that the Promiſer ſhould come to my ſoul; the promiſe is, what, my brethren? the promiſe is, for this and that good thing; have I got it? How would you do if you was to take falſe bank notes, if you was to take falſe bills? the people generally aſk, is the man that has given me this note worth any thing? if you have a bad note you go to the notary and note it, you ſay, I was to have had this note paid ten, twenty, thirty days after ſight, or upon ſight; where is the notary? they note it and proteſt it: let us be careful then to ſee that God pays his notes, as we are that man does. Haſt thou got the thing promiſed? the thing promiſed is, all peace and all joy; the thing

promiſed is, a new heart; the thing promiſed is, a new nature; and therefore David goes to God for the thing promiſed, and ſays, *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right ſpirit within me.* Now is this the caſe of thy heart? the devil never can make a new creature; I am ſure nothing but an Almighty power can take away the heart of ſtone, and give a heart of fleſh: has God wrought this in thee? if he has, though it is not come to ſuch a heighth as thou would wiſh, yet be thankful for what he has done, and ſay, what has God wrought in me! Attend to the word, I do not mean lazily, there is not a thing upon the face of the earth that I abhor ſo much as idleneſs or idle people; I am ſo far from having a love to people that are lazy, that if I had the dealing with a number that are called Chriſtians, they ſhould go to bed ſooner, and get up ſooner; there is one thing that will make people riſe ſooner in the morning in London, and that is, for merchants to agree to have the 'Change opened at ſix, and that will make people as much alive in the morning, as the markets are after people have been travelling all night to prepare for them.

Has

Has God wrought in you a ſpirit of zeal and love? has he wrought in you a love to his name, a zeal for his cauſe? has he wrought in thy heart a deadneſs to the world, that you can live above it from morning to night, having your converſation in heaven? has he wrought in thee a love to his people, not people that are Calviniſts only; not people that hold univerſal redemption only; O be careful as to that; O what nonſenſe is that, for people to hold univerſal redemption, and yet not love all mankind; what nonſenſe is it to hold election, and not *as the elect of God to put on bowels of mercy, kindneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs and long-ſuffering*; as the woman ſaid, I have a houſe will hold a hundred, a heart ten thouſand. Has he wrought in thee a love to thy enemies, ſo that thou doſt not only love them that love thee, but them that hate thee? what ſay you? muſt I put a ſnake in my boſom, no, no; I may hate the conduct, and at the ſame time pray to God for them. Enmity is, *an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.* Love as archbiſhop Cranmer did, that it became a proverb concerning him, that if any man would make him his friend, he muſt do him an injury. Has he wrought in thee a deſire to go

to heaven? has he wrought in thee ſuch a love to Jeſus, that you prefer him to the heaven he dwells in? We count heaven a fine place, and we may ſay, I am glad to ſee the departed ſaints and the angels, but all that will be nothing unleſs I ſee the Lamb in the midſt of the throne. Has God wrought in thee a deſire to promote his glory, to be upon the ſtretch for God, to deny thyſelf, to take up the croſs daily and follow him? if God has wrought this in thee, and I verily believe from my ſoul he has wrought it in ſome degree in many of you, O you may well ſay, *what has God wrought!* eſpecially if you conſider the manner, and the time in which he wrought it; if you conſider the inſtruments he made uſe of, when, and by which he wrought it; and if you conſider the ineſtimable price that was paid for it, and the Spirit taking poſſeſſion of your hearts. One part of our entertaintment in heaven will be, to count the ſteps of the ladder by which God brought us there; one will ſay, God wrought in me when I was young; another, when I had grey hairs. Mary Magdalen will ſay, God wrought in me when I was a ſinner; the expiring criminal will ſay, God wrought it in me juſt as I was turned off,

I was

I was a brand plucked out of the burning. The anthem, as good Mr. Erſkine obſerves, will be in heaven, *what has God wrought!* Curioſity led me to hear the preacher, and God touched my heart; there was a young fellow, called emphatically *wicked Will of Plymouth*, who came, as he ſaid, to pick a hole in the preacher's coat, and the Holy Ghoſt picked a hole in his heart. What has God wrought, to work it in you, and not in your father; you, and not your children; work it in you, and not a fellow-ſervant; work it in one brother and not in another; all theſe things will make us cry, *what has God wrought!* Well, I do not want you to reſt in this by no means; I do not like to hear people talk, and ſpeak againſt inward frames and inward works, nor do I like to hear people legal, let every thing have its proper place. It is about thirty-three years ago, or very near, when a man came to me, after I had preached upon marks and evidences, at Whitechapel I think it was, and ſaid, I am come to tell you, that I don't chuſe any marks at all; then, ſaid I, you muſt be content with the marks of the devil, for you muſt have the one or the other.

Now,

Now, my brethren, if God has wrought this in us, what ſhall I ſay? why, I pray the Lord Jeſus Chriſt that your life and mine may be a life of praiſe. I would have you not only dwell upon particular words of God ſet home upon your hearts, but his various providences, the numerous trials he has brought you through: O think how often you have been kept, think how often you would have run away from God if he had not ſtopped you; what has God wrought, by preventing me from ſin; what has God wrought, by delivering me from blaſphemous thoughts; what has God wrought, in ſnatching me out of the jaws of ruin; even after converſion, when I was damning my own ſoul, his grace arreſted me. Have we brought ourſelves into trials, how has he made theſe very trials work for good; made our ſcolding huſbands and wives, perſecuting fathers, friends and relations, that you have thought would devour you, made the bulls of Baſhan inſtruments of bringing you nearer to God; and eternity will be too ſhort to cry perpetually, *what hath God wrought!*

And if God has not wrought this in any of you that are here, which, perhaps, may be the caſe, though I cannot think what ſhould bring

bring any body here if they had not a desire of the salvation of their souls; if God hath not wrought it in you yet, O that this may be the time; O that God may give us some parting blessing; that some poor creatures that have nothing but the devil's work in them yet, may now seek after the blessed work of the Holy Ghost. If we may ask what God has wrought, let me ask you what the devil hath wrought in you; O thou unconverted soul, sin has made thee a beast, made thy body, which ought to be the temple of the living God, a cage of every unclean bird; what hath satan wrought in thee? but made thee a nest of vile stinking swine; and what will he give thee? hell, hell, hell. The wages the devil gives no man can live by; *the wages of sin is death:* and here I come to bring you good news, glad tidings of great joy; O that God may now counter-work the devil, and take thee into his own workmanship, create thee anew in Christ Jesus, give thee to feel a little of his Spirit's work on thy heart, and make thee, of a child of the devil, a child of God! Say not, it cannot be; say not, it shall not be; say not, it is too late; say not, it is for others but not for me; my brethren, God help you to cry, and to try to-night,

to-night, if thou canſt turn the text into a prayer, Lord God, I have felt the devil work in me, now, good God, let me know what it is for thee to work in me; make me a new creature, create a new ſpirit within me, that I may join with thy dear people in ſinging, *what hath God wrought!* O remember, if this is not the caſe with you, you muſt have a dreadful different ditty in hell; the note there will be, what hath the devil wrought! what hath ſin wrought! how am I come to this place of torment! I ſold my birthright for a meſs of pottage! Heaven or hell is ſet before you to-night; Jeſus grant, that the terrors of the Lord may awaken you to-night, and that you may not reſt till you have comfort and ſupport from God.

You that have this work begun in you, look ſtill for better things to come, even after death, when our bodies are made like Chriſt's glorious body, and our ſouls filled with the fulneſs of God, we ſhall then cry, Churchmen and Diſſenters, Methodiſts and Foundery-men, and the Lock too, we ſhall all then join without any bickerings, ſaying, *what has God wrought!*

I could enlarge, but I am afraid I have been too long already; yet as I think the providence

vidence of God calls me, and I ſhall give a particular account of my call to-morrow evening, at the other end of the town, I think if I ſhould keep you a few minutes longer, it might be excuſed. I begin to feel already it muſt be executed in a few days; I feel already that I ſhall ſoon part from you, and O that God may awaken many of you poor unawakned ſouls; my heart bleeds for you; O may the oil of the bleſſed Spirit ſoften every hard, unconverted heart, that we may go away praiſing and bleſſing God that we ſhall at laſt meet, whether we go by land or by water, before the throne, where we ſhall aſcribe glory, and honour, and power, to him for evermore. Amen.

SERMON XI.

The Burning Buſh.

EXODUS iii. ver. 2, 3.

And he looked, and behold the buſh burned with fire, and the buſh was not conſumed; and Moſes ſaid, I will now turn aſide, and ſee this great ſight, why the buſh is not burnt.

IT is a common ſaying, and common ſayings are generally founded on matter of fact, that it is always darkeſt before break of day; and I am perſuaded, that if we do juſtice to our own experience, as well as conſider God's dealings with his people in preceding ages, we ſhall find that man's extremity has been uſually made God's opportunity, and that *when the enemy has broke in like a flood, the Spirit and providence of God has lifted up a ſtandard againſt him:* and I believe at the ſame time, that however we may dream of a con-

continued ſcene of proſperity in church or ſtate, either in reſpect to our bodies, ſouls, or temporal affairs, we ſhall find this life to be chequered; that the clouds return after the rain, and the moſt proſperous ſtate attended with ſuch cloudy days, as may make even the people of God ſometimes cry, *all men are liars, and God has forgotten to be gracious.*

The chapter in which is our text, is an inſtance of this. What a glorious day of the ſon of man was that when Joſeph ſent for his father to Egypt; and the good old patriarch, after he had thought his ſon had been dead many years, agreeably ſurprized by a meſſage from him to come to him, with all his family, and are by him comfortably ſettled in Goſhen; where the good old patriarch, after many a ſtormy day, died in peace, and was highly honoured at his funeral by Pharaoh and his ſervants, and attended to the ſepulchre of his fathers in Canaan by all his ſons. After which, Joſeph continued to live in ſplendor, lord of all the land of Egypt; and his brethren, doubtleſs, in the height of proſperity: but how ſadly did the ſcene change at Pharaoh's death, ſoon after which, *another king aroſe that knew not Joſeph*, verifying the obſervation, New

lords, new laws, by whom the deſcendants of Jacob, inſtead of reigning in Goſhen, were made bond-ſlaves; many, many long years, employed in making bricks, and, in all probability, had what we call their bibles taken from them, by being forced to conform to the idolatry of Egypt, and ſo were in a worſe ſtate than the unhappy Negroes in America are at this day. No doubt, numbers of them either wondered that ever they had been proſpered at all, or that God had forgot them now; but what a mercy it is that *a thouſand years in God's ſight are but as one day*, and therefore when God's time is come, the ſet time that he has appointed, he will, maugre all the oppoſition of men and devils, he will come down and deliver his people, and in ſuch a manner, that the enemy ſhall know, as well as friends, it is the Lord's doing. A deliverer is born and bred in Pharaoh's court, a Moſes is brought up in all the learning of the Egyptians, for Pharaoh intended him for a high and exalted poſt: but when offers of the higheſt preferment are made to him, he did not catch at them as ſome folks now do, who are very good and humble till ſomething occurs to take them from God. Young as he was, he refuſed

fuſed the higheſt dignity, and ſpurned at it with an holy contempt; and chuſes rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy all the grandeur and pleaſures of, perhaps, one of the greateſt courts on earth. Forty years continued he in this ſtate of obſcurity, in which time he acquired ſuch a competent degree, and variety of knowledge, as qualified him for every thing God intended him for: the occaſion of this, was his kind attempt to compoſe a difference between two of his brethren, one of whom accuſed him of murder, on which he that was to be king in Jeſhurun, is forced to fly into a ſtrange land; there he ſubmits to the humble office of a ſervant, marries, and lives in a ſtate of ſubjection for forty years, as was ſaid before. At length, when he was eighty years old, dreaming of no ſuch thing, behold God calls, and commands him to go and deliver his people; as he himſelf informs us, who is the author of this book, ver. 1. *Now Moſes kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, prieſt of Midian:* he might have ſaid, what ſuch a ſcholar as I keep a parcel of ſheep! ſuch a learned man as I am employed in ſuch a menial ſervice! ſome proud hearts would break firſt, but you never knew a truly great

man

man but would ſtoop; ſome that are called great men, ſwell till they burſt; like ſturdy oaks, they think they can ſtand every wind, till ſome dreadful ſtorm comes and blows them up by the roots, while the humble reed bends and riſes again. Moſes was one of the latter, he keeps the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, and leads them to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. This ſhows how perſons ought to methodize their time; but however the name of a Methodiſt is deſpiſed, they will never be bad ſervants and maſters; you would be only weathercocks, unleſs you took care to order things in proper ſeaſons: the devotion and buſineſs of a Methodiſt go hand in hand; I will aſſure you, Moſes was a Methodiſt, a very fine one, a very ſtrong one too; he kept his flock, but that did not hinder his going to Horeb, he took them to the deſert, and being thus employed in his lawful buſineſs, God met him. Some ſay, we encourage people in idleneſs; I deny it; we ſay, people ought to be induſtrious; and I defy any one to ſay, a perſon is called by God that is negligent in his calling. *The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the buſh:* ſome think this angel was Gabriel, but moſt agree,

and

and I believe with the greateſt probability, that it was Jeſus Chriſt, *the angel of the everlaſting covenant*; and an expoſitor tells you, that the eternal *Logos*, longing to become man, often viſited this earth in that form, as an evidence of his coming by and by, and dying a curſed death for man. The manner of this angel's appearing is taken particular notice of, it was to Moſes when nobody was with him; I do not hear he had ſo much as a boy, or one companion; and I mention this, becauſe I believe we have often found that we are never leſs alone than when with God; we often want this and that companion, but happy they that can ſay, Lord, thy company is enough. Moſes was ſtartled at the ſight, and I don't know that he is to be diſcommended for it, it was not to gratify a bare curioſity, but ſeeing a buſh burning it engaged his attention, and made him think that ſomething was uncommon; *the buſh burned with fire and yet was not conſumed*; this ſtartled him, as it was intended to do; for where God deſigns to ſpeak, he will firſt gain attention from the perſon ſpoken to; Moſes therefore ſays, *I will now turn aſide and ſee this great ſight, why the buſh is not burned*; he did not know but the

buſh

buſh might take fire by ſome accident; he ſaw no fire come from above, he ſaw no fire round the buſh, yet that did not ſo much ſtartle him, as to ſee, though it did burn, it was not conſumed, or in the leaſt diminiſhed; it was a ſtrange ſight, but it was, my brethren, a glorious one; a ſight which, I pray God, you and I may behold with faith and comfort this evening; for, my dear hearers, this buſh, and the account of it, was given for our learning; and I will venture to ſay, could Moſes ariſe from the dead, he would not be angry with me for telling you, this is of no private interpretation, but is intended as a ſtanding leſſon, as a ſignificant emblem of the church, and every individual child of God, till time it ſelf ſhall be no more. I would therefore obſerve to you, that this buſh,

In the firſt place, is typical of the church of God in all ages; the buſh was burning, why might it not be a tall cedar, why might it not be ſome large or ſome glorious tree, why ſhould the great God chuſe a buſh, a little buſh of briars and thorns, above any other thing? but becauſe the church of Chriſt generally conſiſts of poor, mean, deſpicable creatures: tho' it is all glorious within, yet it is all deſpicable without.

without. It is obſervable, that when the church came to proſper, when Conſtantine ſmiled on it, it was ſoon hugged to death; and that great poet, Milton, obſerves, that when that emperor gave miniſters rich veſtments, high honours, great livings, and golden pulpits, there was a voice heard from heaven, ſaying, this day there is poiſon come into the church; and I have ſometimes ſaid in diſcourſe, I don't doubt but if any one made an experiment, and left 100,000*l.* or 200,000*l.* only among the Methodiſts, there would be hundreds and thouſands that would not be reckoned Methodiſts now, that would turn Methodiſts preſently, that would buy an hymn-book, becauſe a part of the legacy would pay for the hymn-book, and would wiſh to have a living into the bargain: but though *not many mighty men, not many noble are called*, yet ſome are; if any of you are rich here, and are Chriſtians, thank God for it, you ought to be doubly thankful for it; God's people are but like a little bramble buſh. I remember an eminent miniſter ſaid once, when I heard him preach upon Chriſtmas-day, *Chriſt perſonal is very rich, but Chriſt myſtical is very poor*; and Jeſus Chriſt does this on purpoſe to confound

the world. When he comes to judgment, millions that have their thouſands now, will be damned and burn to all eternity, and Chriſt's church will be rich to all eternity, that is now like a bramble all on fire.

The buſh burned, what is that for? it ſhewed that Chriſt's church while in this world, will be a buſh burning with fiery trials and afflictions of various kinds; this was a lively emblem of the ſtate of religion, and liberty of Iſrael at that time: they were buſy making of brick, and there conſequently were burning continually; as though the Lord had ſaid, this buſh is burning with fire, ſo my people are burning with ſlavery. Ah but, ſay you, that was only the caſe of the Iſraelites when they were under Pharaoh; pray is not that the caſe of the church in all ages? yes, it has been; read your bibles, and you may inſtantly ſee that it is little elſe than an hiſtorical account of a burning buſh; and though there might be ſome periods wherein the church had reſt, yet theſe periods have been of a ſhort date; and if God's people have *walked in the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt*, it is only like a calm that preceeds an earthquake. If you remember, before the laſt earthquake it was a fine morning,

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and who, when they aroſe in the morning, would have thought the earth ſhould ſhake under them before night; and ſo with the church when they are in a calm, and all ſeems ſafe there, then comes a ſtorm: God prepare us for it.

But this is not only the caſe with the church of Chriſt collected, but alſo it is ſo with individual believers, eſpecially thoſe that God intends to make great uſe of as prophets in his church. I know very well that 'tis ſaid, that now the caſe is altered: modern commentators therefore, and our great Dr. Young, calls them downy Doctors; they tell us, now we have got a Chriſtian king and governor, and are under the toleration act, we ſhall have no perſecution; and, bleſſed be God, we have had none ſince this family has been on the throne: may God continue it till time ſhall be no more. Yet, my dear hearers, we ſhall find, if God's word is true, whether we are born under a deſpotic power, or a free government, that they that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus muſt ſuffer perſecution. You have heard of that ſaying, *Wonder not at the fiery trial wherewith you are to be tried*; and God ſaith, *I have choſen thee*, which is appli-

cable to every believer, *in the furnace of affliction.* Now the furnace is a hot place, and they that are tried in the furnace muſt be burnt ſurely. Now what muſt the Chriſtian burn with? with tribulation and perſecution. I heard a perſon not long ago ſay, I have no enemies. Biſhop Latimer came to a houſe one day, and the man of the houſe ſaid, he had not met with a croſs in all his life; give me my horſe, ſays the good biſhop, I am ſure God is not here where no croſs is. But ſuppoſe we are not perſecuted by the world, is there one Chriſtian but is perſecuted by his friends; if there is an Iſaac in the family, I warrant there is an Iſhmael to mock at him, *Woe is me*, ſays David, *that I muſt dwell with Meſheck, and in Kedar:* and in one's own family, one's own brothers and ſiſters, one's own dependants, though they wait for our death, and, perhaps, long to have us gone, that they may run away with our ſubſtance, to have theſe perſons mock at us, and if they dare not ſpeak out, yet let us ſee they hate the God we worſhip; if this is thy caſe, why, God knows, poor ſoul, thou art a burning buſh; but if we have no ſuch thing as mocking, yet if we are ſurrounded with afflictions,

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domeſtic trials, the loſs of dear and near friends, the bad conduct of our children, the dreadful miſconduct of thoſe that are dependant upon us; O there is many a parent here that is a burning buſh; burning with what? with family afflictions; ſome don't care what becomes of their children; O, I thank God, I have left my boy ſo much, and my daughter a coach, perhaps; ah! well your ſon and daughter may ride in that coach poſt to the devil: but the godly man ſays, I want an eternal inheritance for my ſon; I want God's bleſſing for him; this is the poor man's prayer, while the poor deluded youth mocks him: or, ſuppoſing this is not the caſe, a perſon may burn with inward temptation; you have heard of the fiery darts of the devil, and was you to feel them, I believe you would find them fiery darts indeed! and you have great reaſon to ſuſpect your experience, your having any intereſt in the love of the Son of God at all, if you never found the fiery darts of the devil. O, ſays one, I never felt the devil; I am ſure thou mayſt feel him now; thou art dadda's own child; thou art ſpeaking the very language of the devil, and he is teaching thee to deny thy own father; therefore, graceleſs child of the devil,

devil, you never felt the devil's fiery darts, it is becauſe the devil is ſure of thee; he has got thee into a damnable ſlumber; may the God of love wake thee before real damnation comes! The fiery darts of ſatan are poiſoned, and wherever they ſtick they fill the perſon with tormenting pain like fire; this I mention, becauſe there are ſome poor ſouls perhaps here to-night, whom the devil tells, thou haſt committed the unpardonable ſin; you are afraid to come to ſacrament, you are afraid to go to prayer, becauſe at theſe ſeaſons the devil diſturbs thee moſt, and tempts you to leave theſe ſeaſons; and there are ſome go on thus burning a great while. My brethren, the time would fail, and I ſhall draw this diſcourſe to too great a length, and hinder you from your families, if I was to mention but a few more of thoſe thouſands that the believer burns with, the trials without, and, what is ſtill worſe, their trials within. Why, ſays one, it is very ſtrange you talk thus to-night; I am ſorry it is ſtrange to any of you; ſure you are not much acquainted with your bibles, and leſs with your hearts, if you know not this. Why ſure, ſay ſome, you make God a tyrant; no, but having made ourſelves devil's incarnate,

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we are now in a ſtate of preparation, and theſe various trials are intended by the great God to train us up for heaven; and therefore, that you may not think I am drawing a picture without any life, give me leave to obſerve, that it is particularly remarkable, that though *the buſh burned, it was not conſumed:* it was this ſtruck Moſes, he looked to ſee why the buſh was not conſumed. But the burning I have been here painting forth to you, is not a conſuming, but a purifying fire; is not that enough to anſwer the ſhade that has been already drawn; it is true the buſh burns, the Chriſtian is perſecuted, the Chriſtian is oppreſſed, the Chriſtian is burned with inward trials, he is perplexed at times, he is *caſt down, but,* bleſſed be God, *he is not deſtroyed,* he is not in deſpair. Who is that, that ſays he has got into ſuch an eſtate that nothing diſturbs him? vain man! he diſcovers an ignorance of Chriſt; are you greater then than the apoſtle Paul? ſome people think that the apoſtles had no trials; ſo they think, perhaps, of ſome miniſters, that they are always on the mount, while, perhaps, they have been in the burning to get that ſermon for them. We that are to ſpeak for others, muſt expect to

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be tempted in all things like to our brethren, or we ſhould be only poor whip-ſyllabub preachers, and not reach mens hearts. But whether miniſters or people burn, the great God, the angel of the everlaſting covenant, ſpoke to Moſes out of the buſh; he did not ſtand at a diſtance from the buſh, he did not ſpeak to him ſo much as one yard or foot from the buſh, but he ſpoke to him out of the buſh; he ſaid, Moſes, Moſes, my people ſhall burn in this buſh to the end of time, but be not afraid, I will ſuccour them; when they burn, I will burn too. There is a ſcripture vaſtly ſtrong to this purpoſe, in which it is not ſaid, *the good will of him that* was *in the buſh*, but *the good will of him that* dwelt *in the buſh*. Amazing! I thought God dwelt in heaven; but as a poor woman who was once in darkneſs fourteen years, before ſhe was brought out of it, ſaid, God has two homes, one in heaven, the other in the loweſt heart. He dwells in the buſh, and I am ſure if he did not, the devil and their own curſed hearts would burn the buſh to aſhes. How is it that it is not conſumed? why, it is becauſe God has declared it ſhall not be conſumed; he has made an everlaſting covenant, and I pity thoſe that

that are not acquainted with an intereſt in God's covenant; and it would be better that people would pity them, than diſpute with them: I really believe a diſputing devil is one of the worſt devils that can be brought into God's church, for he comes with his gown and book in his hand, and I ſhould always ſuſpect the devil when he comes in his gown and band, and this is the cauſe they agree and diſagree. Some, who it's to be hoped are God's children, if you tell them that God has loved them with an everlaſting love, they are afraid to ſuck it in, and eſpecially if you pop out the word election, or that hard word predeſtination, they will be quite frightned; but talk to them in another way, their dear hearts will rejoice. God has ſaid, *As the waters of Noah ſhall ceaſe for ever, ſo he will not forget the covenant of his peace; nothing ſhall pluck them out of his hand.* Ah! ſay ſome, the apoſtle has ſaid, *that neither things preſent, nor things to come, ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt*; but he has not ſaid an evil heart ſhall not; I fancy that is one of the *preſent things.* The buſh is not conſumed, becauſe if the devil is in the buſh, God is in the buſh too; if the devil acts one way, the Lord, the Spirit, acts

another to balance it, and the Spirit of God is engaged to train up the ſouls of his people; and God has determined the buſh ſhall not be conſumed; his Spirit ſtands near believers to ſupport and guide, and make them more than conquerors: all that are given to Jeſus Chriſt ſhall come, he will not loſe one of them; this is food for the children of God; a bad mind will turn every thing to poiſon; and if it was not for this, that God had promiſed to keep them, my ſoul within theſe thirty years would have ſunk a thouſand times over. Come then, O ſuffering ſaints, to you the word of this ſalvation is ſent. I don't know who of you are the followers of the Lamb; may the Spirit of the living God point them out, may every one be enabled to ſay, I am the man. O, ſays one, I have been watching and very attentive to-night, but you have not mentioned my burnings; what do you think of my burning luſts? what do you think of my burning corruptions? what do you think of my burning pride? O, perhaps ſome of you will ſay, thank God, I have no pride at all; like the biſhop of Cambray, as mentioned by Dr. Watts, who ſaid, he had received many ſins from his father Adam, but, thank God, he had

had no pride. Alas! alas! we are all as proud as the devil. Pray what do you think of paſſion, that burns not only themſelves but all around them? what do you think of enmity? what do you think of jealouſy, is not this ſomething that burns the buſh? and there are ſome people that pride themſelves, they have not got ſo much of the beaſt about them, they never got drunk, ſcorn to commit murder, and at the ſame time are as full of enmity, of envy, malice, and pride, as the devil: the Lord God help ſuch to ſee their condition. Happy is it Chriſt can dwell in the buſh when we cannot dwell ourſelves there: there are few Chriſtians can live together, very few relations can live together under one roof; we can take that from other people that we can't bear from our own fleſh and blood; and if God did not bear with us more than we bear with one another, we ſhould all have been deſtroyed every day. Does the devil make you ſay, that you will give all up; I will go to the Tabernacle no more; I will lay upon my couch and take my eaſe; Oh! if this is the caſe of any to-night, thus tempted by ſatan, may God reſcue their ſouls. O poor dear ſoul, you never will have ſuch ſweet words from God as when you

are in the buſh; our ſuffering times will be our beſt times. I know we had more comfort in Moorfields, on Kennington-Common, and eſpecially when the rotten eggs, the cats and dogs were thrown upon me, and my gown was filled with clods of dirt that I could ſcarce move it; I have had more comfort in this burning buſh than when I have been in eaſe. I remember when I was preaching at Exeter, a ſtone came and made my forehead bleed, I found at that very time the word came with double power to a labourer that was gazing at me, who was wounded at the ſame time by another ſtone, I felt for the lad more than for myſelf, went to a friend, and the lad came to me, Sir, ſays he, the man gave me a wound, but Jeſus healed me; I never had my bonds broke till I had my head broke. I appeal to you, whether you were not better when it was colder than now, becauſe your nerves were braced up; you have a day like a dog-day, now you are weak, and are obliged to fan yourſelves: thus it is proſperity lulls the ſoul, and I fear Chriſtians are ſpoiled by it.

Whatever your trials are, let this be your prayer, Lord, though the buſh is burning, let it not be conſumed. I think that is too low,

low, let it be thus; Lord, when the buſh is burning, let me not burn lower as the fire does, but let me burn higher and higher: I thank thee, my God, for trouble; I thank thee, my God, for putting me into theſe afflictions one after another; I thought I could ſing a requiem to myſelf, that I ſhould have a little reſt, but trouble came from that very quarter where I might reaſonably expect the greateſt comfort: I thank thee for knocking my hands off from the creature; Lord, I believe, help my unbelief; and thus you will go on bleſſing God to all eternity: by and by the buſh ſhall be tranſlated to the paradiſe of God; no burning buſh in heaven, except the fire of love, wonder, and gratitude; no trials there, troubles are limited to this earth, above our enemies can't reach us.

Perhaps there are ſome of you here are ſaying, *burning buſh, a buſh burnt and not conſumed!* I don't know what to make of this nonſenſe: come, come, go on, I am uſed to it, and I gueſs what are the thoughts of your hearts: I pray God, that every one of you here may be afraid of comfort, leſt they ſhould be toſſed about by the devil. What is it I have ſaid? how have I talked in ſuch an unintelligible

gible manner? why, ſay you, what do you mean by a burning buſh? why, thou art the very man, how ſo? why, you are burning with the devil in your hearts; you are burning with foppery, with nonſenſe, with *the luſt of the fleſh*, with *the luſt of the eye, and pride of life*; and if you do not get out of this ſtate, as Lot ſaid to his ſons-in-law, e're long you ſhall be burning in hell, and not conſumed: the ſame angel of the covenant who ſpake to Moſes out of the buſh, he ſhall e're long deſcend, ſurrounded with millions of the heavenly hoſts, and ſentence you to everlaſting burnings. O you frighten me! did you think I did not intend to frighten you? would to God I might frighten you enough! I believe it will be no harm for you to be frightned out of hell, to be frightned out of an unconverted ſtate: O go and tell your companions that the madman ſaid, that wicked men are as firebrands of hell: God pluck you as brands out of that burning. Bleſſed be God, that there is yet a day of grace; Oh! that this might prove *the accepted time*; Oh! that this might prove *the day of ſalvation*; Oh! angel of the everlaſting covenant, come down; thou bleſſed, dear comforter, have mercy, mercy, mercy upon the unconverted,

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upon our unconverted friends, upon the unconverted part of this auditory; *speak, and it shall be done; command, O Lord, and it shall come to pass*; turn the burning bushes of the devil into burning bushes of the Son of God: who knows but God may hear our prayer, who knows but God may hear this cry, *I have seen, I have seen the afflictions of my people; the cry of the children of Israel is come up to me, and I am come down to deliver them:* God grant this may be his word to you under all your trouble; God grant he may be your comforter. The Lord awaken you that are dead in sin, and though on the precipice of hell, God keep you from tumbling in: and you that are God's burning bushes, God help you to stand to keep this coat of arms, to say when you go home, blessed be God, *the bush is burning, but not consumed.* Amen! even so, Lord Jesus. Amen!

SERMON

SERMON XII.

Soul Dejection.

PSALM xlii. ver. 5.

Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, for the help of his countenance.

I HAVE often told you, in my plain way of ſpeaking, that grace is very frequently grafted on a crab-ſtock; that the Lord Jeſus picks out perſons of the moſt peeviſh, churliſh diſpoſition, and imparts to them the largeſt meaſure of grace, but for want of a better natural temper, a great deal of grace does not ſhine ſo bright in them, as a ſmall degree in thoſe that are conſtitutionally good-natured: perſons of this diſpoſition are generally complaining, and are not only tormentors of themſelves, but are great plagues to thoſe that are about them; you will hear them always

always complaining ſomething or other is the matter. What a pity it is we cannot all agree in one thing, to leave off chiding others to chide our own ſelves, till we can find nothing in ourſelves to chide for; this we ſhall find will be a good way to grow in the divine life, when, by conſtant application to the Lamb of God, we get a maſtery over thoſe things which hitherto have had the maſtery over us; but are theſe the only people that complain? are people of a melancholy diſpoſition only ſubject to a diſquietude of heart? I will venture to affirm, that the greateſt, the deareſt children of God, have got their complaining, and their dreary hours. Thoſe who have been favoured with large meaſures of grace, even thoſe that have been wrapped up as it were to the third heavens, baſking on the mount in the ſunſhine of redeeming grace, and in raptures of love crying out, *It is good for us to be here*, even theſe muſt go down to Gethſemane; and if they would not be ſcorched with a ſtrong burning fever from the ſun of proſperity, ſhall find clouds from time to time overſhadowing them, not to burn, but to keep them low. It is on this account, that you ſee good men in different frames at different times: our Lord

himſelf was ſo, he rejoiced ſometimes in ſpirit, but at other times you find him, eſpecially near the laſt, crying out, *My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful even unto death, tarry you here and watch.* And I am going to tell you of one to-night, who had the honour of being called, *the man after God's own heart*; and who, though an Old Teſtament ſaint, was greatly bleſſed with a New Teſtament ſpirit, and had the honour of compoſing Pſalms, which in all paſt ages of the church have been, and in future ones will be a rich magazine, and ſtore-houſe of ſpiritual experience, from which the children of God may draw ſpiritual armour for fighting the good fight of faith, until God ſhall call them to life eternal: may this be your happy lot. What frame was this good man in when he compoſed this forty-ſecond Pſalm? the Pſalm itſelf can beſt tell. It ſeems compoſed when he was either perſecuted by Saul, or driven from his own court by his ſondling, beloved ſon, Abſalom; then David appeared truly great; I honour him when I ſee him yonder, attending a few ſheep; but I admire the young ſtripling, when I ſee him come out with his ſling and ſtone, and aiming it at the head of Goliah, the ene-

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my of God; or, when exalted and filling the ſeat of juſtice; but to me he never appears greater, than when he is bowed down in low circumſtances, beſet on every ſide, ſtruggling between ſenſe and faith; and, as the ſun after an eclipſe, breaking forth with greater luſtre to all the ſpectators. In this view we muſt conſider this great, this good man, David, when he cries out, *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul, why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God.*

Suppoſing you underſtand the words as a queſtion, *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul,* though thou art in ſuch circumſtances? pray now what is the cauſe of thy being ſo dejected? The word implies, that he was ſinking under the weight of his preſent burden, like a perſon ſtooping under a load that lies upon his ſhoulders; and the conſequence of this preſſure without was diſquietude, uneaſineſs and anxiety within; for, ſay what you will to the contrary, there is ſuch a connection between ſoul and body, that when one is diſordered, the other muſt ſympathize with its ever-loving friend.

Or, you may underſtand it as chiding himſelf, *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul, why*

art thou diſquieted within me, how fooliſh is it to be thus drooping and dejected; how improper for one favoured of God with ſo many providences, and ſpecial particular privileges, for ſuch a one as thou art thus to ſtoop, and be made ſubject to every temptation; why doſt thou give thy enemies ſuch room to find fault with thy religion on account of thy gloomy looks, and the diſquietude of thy heart? a yoke which thou wilt find to be lined with love, and God will keep it from galling thy ſhoulders. You ſee, he ſpeaks not to others but to himſelf; would to God we did thus learn that charity begins at home. Then he goes to God with his caſe, O my God, ſays he, *my ſoul is caſt down within me.* O that we could learn, when in theſe moods to go more to God, and leſs to man, we ſhould find more relief, and religion would be leſs diſhonoured. But ſee how faith triumphs in the midſt of all, no ſooner does unbelief pop up its head, but faith immediately knocks it down. A never-failing maxim is here propoſed, *hope thou in God*, truſt in God, believe in God; for I am ſure, and all of you that know Jeſus Chriſt are perſuaded of it too, that all our troubles ariſe from our unbelief:

belief: O unbelief, injurious bar to comfort, ſource of tormenting fear! on the contrary, faith bears every thing. *Put thy truſt in God*, as in the old tranſlation; *hope in God*, as in the new, *I ſhall yet praiſe him.* The devil tells me my trouble is ſo great, I ſhall never lift up my head again; but unbelief and the devil are liars; *I ſhall yet praiſe him*; my God will carry me through all; I ſhall yet praiſe him, even for caſting me down; I ſhall praiſe him even for that which is the cauſe of all my diſquietude; he will be *the health of my countenance*; though my afflictions have now made my body low, ſuck up my ſpirits, and hurt my animal frame, *he will be the help of my countenance*; I ſhall by and by ſee him again, and be favoured with thoſe transforming views, which my God has favoured me with in times paſt; *he is the health of my countenance, and my God:* though the devil tempts me, and my evil neighbours ſay, *where is now thy God?* Doſt thou think thou art a child of God, and thy Father ſuffers thee to be caſt down? I tell thee, I tell thee, O ſatan, that God who I have been ſo vilely tempted as to believe has forſaken me, will come over the mountains of my guilt, will forgive my backſlidings againſt himſelf,

himſelf, my unbelief ſhall not make his promiſes of none effect; I ſhall praiſe him even while I live, I ſhall praiſe him before I die, I ſhall praiſe him for ever in heaven, where he will be, after death, *the health of my countenance, and my God*; thus faith will get the better in a ſaint. David was ſometimes left to ſay, in effect, all things are againſt me; yet ſtill in moſt of the Pſalms, in this, the next, the cxiiith, and many of the reſt, he triumphs in God; and he compoſed but very few without praiſing at the end, though he complains at the beginning: God help us thus to do!

But it is time to leave off ſpeaking particularly of David, and to turn to you to whom theſe words, I pray God, may prove ſalutary and uſeful. I have had a great ſtruggle in my mind this afternoon what I ſhould preach from; I have been praying and looking up to God, and could not preach for my life on any other text, which has often been the caſe before, and whenever it was, ſome poor ſoul has been comforted and raiſed up; and among ſuch a mixed multitude, there are ſome, no doubt, come to this poor deſpiſed place caſt down and diſquieted within; I ſhall endeavour to enquire what you are caſt down for, and then I ſhall propoſe

propoſe a great cure for you, namely, truſt in God; and I pray, that what was David's comfort may be yours. Why ſhould not we expect an anſwer when we pray, that God before you go home may make you whether you will or no, leave your burdens behind you? and God keep you from taking them up as you go home.

Probably, there may be ſome of you that are real believers; perhaps, I ought to aſk your pardon: where am I preaching, in the Tabernacle! the moſt deſpiſed place in London! ſo ſcandalous a place, that many of the children of God would rather go elſewhere! God help us to keep up our ſcandal! But yet I believe there are many King's daughters here, many of you whom God enabled in this place firſt to ſay, *My Lord, and my God.* When you put your fingers, as it were, on the print of Chriſt's nails, and put your hands into his ſide, and were no longer faithleſs, but believing, you thought you ſhould never be caſt down any more, but now you have found yourſelves miſtaken; and I ſhall endeavour, in the proſecution of this text, to ſpeak to all that are caſt down, whether before or after converſion, and then to ſuch that were never caſt

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down at all; and if you was never caſt down before, God caſt you down now.

What are perſons caſt down for? what are ſome of you diſquieted within for? I have reaſon to believe, from the notes put up at both ends of the town, that there are many of you that have arrows of conviction ſtuck faſt in your ſouls; I have taken in near two hundred at the other end of the town, within a fortnight; if this be the caſe, that God is thus at work, let the devil roar, and we will go on in the name of the Lord. And what are you caſt down for? ſome poor ſoul will ſay, with a ſenſe of ſin, the guilt of it, the enmity of it, the very aggravated circumſtances that attend it, appear and ſet themſelves as in battle-array before me: once I thought I had no ſin, at leaſt, I thought that ſin was not ſo exceeding ſinful; but I now find it ſuch a burden, I could almoſt ſay with Cain, *it is greater than I can bear.* And, perhaps, ſome of you are ſo caſt down, as in your haſte to ſay as colonel Gardiner, that great man of God, told me himſelf had ſaid when under conviction, "I "believe God cannot be juſt, unleſs he damns "my wicked ſoul." Is this thy caſe? art thou wicked, art thou ſo caſt down, ſo diſquieted,

quieted, that thou canſt not reſt night nor day, ſhall I ſend thee away without any comfort? ſhall I ſend thee away as the legal preachers do? as a miniſter ſome time ago did, when a man told him how wicked he had been; O, ſays he, if you are ſo wicked you are damn'd to be ſure, I ſhall not trouble myſelf with you. When a poor negro was taken up for thieving, another went to him and ſaid, you are ſo bad I muſt turn my back to you; that is the law, but the goſpel is turn thy face to God; think not that God is dealing with thee as an abſolute God, a God out of Chriſt. I would have nothing to do, ſays Luther, with an abſolute God; as ſuch he is a conſuming fire. Truſt God in Chriſt, throw thyſelf upon him, throw thyſelf on the Son of God; cry with thy brother, and now thou art in that temper, thou wilt not be aſhamed to call the thief thy brother; ſay with him, *Lord, remember me when thou art in thy kingdom:* thou ſhalt yet praiſe him, thou ſhalt yet have the forgiveneſs of thy ſins; thy pardon ſhall not only be ſealed in heaven, but thou ſhalt have it in thy heart: theſe are only the pangs of the new birth, the firſt ſtrugglings of the ſoul immerſing into the divine life; he ſhall yet be the health of thy

countenance: theſe poor cheeks, though bedewed with tears, ſhall by and by have a fine bluſh, when a pardoning God comes with his love; it ſhall even make a change in thy countenance, for as a heavy heart makes a man's countenance ſad, ſo a chearful heart makes the countenance pleaſant: thou ſhalt know him to be thy God, thou ſhalt ſay, *my Lord, and my God:* Lord Jeſus grant this may be the happy moment. Was Jeſus here, was the Redeemer now in this metropolis, I am ſure he would go about the ſtreets, he would be a field-preacher, he would go out into the highways and hedges, he would invite, he would run after them; Lord Jeſus, take the veil from our hearts, and let us ſee to-night thy loving heart as the Son of God! Truſt in God, you will ſay, it is very eaſy for you to ſay ſo, but I cannot truſt in God; can't you, who told you that? that is the work of God, you are not far from the kingdom of God. Who convinced thee of thy inability to believe, do you think the devil did? no, it was the Spirit of God procured by the blood of the Lamb, that was to come to convince the world of ſin. If thou canſt not truſt as thou wouldſt, ſay, *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief*; ſtretch out thy

thy poor hand. I am thinking of Sunday laſt, when I was giving the ſacrament, I obſerved there was one blind communicant that could not ſee, but he thruſt out his hand; I obſerved ſeveral lame perſons, but there were enough to give it to them; I ſaw alſo a poor barrow-woman, and I took particular care to give the cup to her; ſo I put it up to the mouth of the poor blind man: if that is the caſe, what love muſt there be in God to the poor ſoul!

But, methinks, I hear ſome poor ſoul ſay, that is not my caſe, I am not caſt down for that, but I am caſt down becauſe after that I knew God to be my God, after I knew Jeſus to be my King, and after I had mounted upon my high places, the devil and my unbelieving heart threw me down again; would you not have me caſt down? would you not have me diſquieted? a perſon of an Antinomian ſpirit would ſay, don't tell me of your frames, I have learned to live by faith, I don't care whether Chriſt manifeſts himſelf to me or no, I have got the word and the promiſe, I am content with a promiſe now; ſo theſe poor creatures go on without any frame, becauſe they will not live in it: from ſuch Antinomianiſm, good God, deliver me. How!

how! how! not caſt down at an abſent God, not diſquieted when God withdraws? where are you gone? you are gone far from your father's houſe; if nothing elſe will do, may your father whip you home again. But tender hearts when they reflect how it was once, are caſt down; David ſays, *My tears have been my meat day and night, for I had gone with a multitude to the houſe of God.* Here he looks back upon his former enjoyments, his ſpiritual proſperity, (as Job looks back upon his temporal) and ſays, *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul;* it is becauſe I don't meet God in his ordinances as I uſed to do; poor deſerted, panting ſoul! poor diſquieted ſoul! he muſt be the help of thy countenance, he will yet be thy God. Who was it ſought Jeſus ſorrowing? what would you have thought of the Virgin Mary if ſhe had ſaid, I don't care whether I ſee my ſon or not; ſhe ſought him, and found him in the temple: God grant every poor deſerted ſoul may find him to-night; I mean, in the temple of his heart. And in the caſe of Mary, ſhe ſays, *They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him*; if they had not taken away her Lord, Mary would have been rich: ſo you may ſay your

your corruptions, your backſlidings and ingratitude, have taken away your Lord: Lord grant thou mayſt find him to-night. He that ſaid, *Mary*, can call thee to-night, and can make thee ſay, My dear Lord, I come to-night; he can call thee by thy name.

But, ſay you, I am caſt down becauſe I am wearied with temptation; not only my God is departed from me, but an evil ſpirit is come upon me to torment me; I am haunted with this and that evil ſuggeſtion, that I am a terror to myſelf. Come, come, hear what David ſaith in the beginning of the Pſalm, *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God.* What ſay you to that? if you have a mind to ſee the beauty of this verſe, read Mr. Hervey's Theron and Aſpaſio, which will live when its deſpiſers are dead; and thoſe that have endeavoured to diſparage him will be obliged to own, that he was one of the greateſt luminaries we ever had, and one that has laid down the doctrines of the goſpel, in a manner to charm and allure the great and noble. Well, is it thy caſe that unbelief dogs thee go where thou will? well, ſtill truſt in God, *thou ſhalt yet praiſe him for the help of his countenance; he will command his loving-kindneſs in the day, and*

and his ſong ſhall be with thee in the night. Though it be night, there is ſome moon, bleſſed be God, or ſome ſtars; and if there is a fog that you cannot ſee, God can quiet his people in the dark, he will make the enemy flee; fear him not, God will comfort thee, and puniſh the devil for tempting thee, if thou truſt in him.

But, ſay you, I am caſt down and diſquieted within me; why? becauſe I have one affliction after another, no ſooner is one trial gone, but another ſucceeds; now I think I ſhall have a little reſt, the tormentor will not come nigh me to-day, but no ſooner has the Chriſtian ſo ſaid, but another ſtorm comes, and the clouds return after the rain; then we think we muſt be caſt down, and that we ought to be diſquieted; this was David's caſe; what does he ſay? *All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.* I believe he found after that, there were more waves to come than he had yet felt; why? ſays a poor diſtreſſed ſoul, becauſe I have been ſo long in Chriſt, and have got theſe curſed corruptions yet within. I thought to have been rid of them all long ago; I thought I had no corruptions left thirty-three years ago, and that

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the Canaanites were all rooted out of the land, that Pharaoh and his hoſt were all drowned in the red-ſea; but I find the old man is ſtrong in me, I look upon myſelf to be leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints, God knows; and you that walk near God, and have made greater advances in the divine life, if you are honeſt muſt ſay, O this body of ſin and death, if I ſhut this old man out at the fore-door, he comes in at the back-door. Come, come, come ſoul, truſt in God, he will give power to the faint, he will give ſtrength, and in due time deliver thee: go to God, tell him of them; beg thy Redeemer to take his whip into his hand, either of ſmall or large cords, and uſe it, rather than your corruptions ſhould get head again.

Time would fail to mention all that are caſt down on theſe accounts, but I muſt mention one more; perhaps, ſome of you may be caſt down with the fear not of death only, but of judgment. I believe there are thouſands of people die a thouſand times, for fear of dying once. Dr. Mather and Mr. Pemberton, of New-England, were always afraid of dying, but when they came to die; one or both of them ſaid to ſome that were intimate with them,

them, *Is this all, I can bear this very well:* and I have generally found that a poor ſoul, that cannot act that faith on God it once did, or in old age when the body grows infirm, as they uſed to do, yet they go off rejoicing in God, as a good ſoul that was buried at the Chapel the other day, ſaid, *I am going over Jordan.* Therefore, O poor ſoul, leave this to God, he will take care of thy dying hour. If any of you are poor here, and I was to promiſe to give you a coffin and a ſhroud you would be eaſy; now can you truſt the word of a man, and not that of a God? Well, the Lord help you to truſt in him; *having loved his own, he loves them to the end*; he is a faithful, unchangeable friend, that ſticketh cloſer than a brother.

Who would not be a Chriſtian, who would but be a believer, my brethren; ſee the preciouſneſs of a believer's faith; the quacks will ſay, here buy this packet, which is good for all diſeaſes, and is really worth nothing; but this will never fail the ſoul. Now I wiſh I could make you all angry; I am a ſad miſchief-maker; but I will aſſure you, I don't want to make you angry with one another: ſome people that profeſs to have grace in their hearts,

hearts, ſeem reſolved to ſet all God's people at variance; they are like Sampſon's foxes with firebrands in their tails, ſetting fire to all about them. Are any of you come from the Foundery, or any other place to-night? I do not care where you come from, I pray God you may all quarrel to-night; I want you to fall out with your own hearts; if we were employed as we ought to be, we ſhould have leſs time to talk about the vain things that are the ſubjects of converſation: God grant your croſſes may be left at the croſs of the Lamb of God this night.

And if there be any of you here, as no doubt there are many, that are crying what nonſenſe he is preaching to-night, I ſhould not wonder if they were to mimick me when they go home; if they ſhould ſay, I thank God, I was never caſt down; you take God's name in vain; you thank God you was never caſt down, the very anſwer you have given makes me caſt down for you; why ſo? why, as the Lord liveth, I ſpeak out of compaſſion, there is but one ſtep between thee and death. Don't you know the ſeſſions began at the Old-Bailey to-day, if there were any capitally convicted, what would you think to ſee them

p'aying at cards, or go on rattling and drinking, and ſwearing? would not you yourſelf cry, and if it were a child of your own, would it not break your heart? but yet thou art that wretch; I muſt weep for thee, my brother-ſinner; we had both one father and mother, Adam and Eve; this was our ſad original.

Dear Chriſtians, pray for me to-night. I remember once I was preaching in Scotland, and ſaw ten thouſand affected in a moment, ſome with joy, others crying "I cannot believe;" others, "God has given me faith," ſome fainting in their friends arms: ſeeing two ſtout creatures upon a tomb-ſtone, hardened indeed, I cried out, you rebels come down, and down they fell directly, and cried before they went away, *What ſhall we do to be ſaved?* Have any of you got apprentices, whom you have brought from time to time to the Tabernacle, but now will not let them come, becauſe you think they grow worſe and worſe, and you will be tempted to leave off praying for them? don't do that; who knows but this may be the happy time. Children of godly parents, apprentices of godly people, ſervants of people who fear the Lord, that hear goſpel-preachers, that are on the watch for every infirmity, that

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go to their fellow-ſervants and ſay, theſe ſaints love good eating and drinking, they are only goſpel-goſſips; is this the caſe of any of you, if it is, you are in a deplorable condition, under the goſpel and not convinced thereby: O may God bring down you rebels to-night; may this be the happy hour you may be caſt down and diſquieted within you. What can I ſay more? I would ſpeak till I burſt, I would ſpeak till I could ſay no more. O poor ſoul, that haſt been never yet caſt down, I will tell you, if you die without being caſt down, however you may die and have no pangs in your death, and your carnal relations may thank God that you died like lambs, but no ſooner will your ſouls be out of your bodies, but God will caſt you down to hell, you will be lifting up your eyes in yonder place of torment, you will be diſquieted, but there will be nobody there to ſay, *hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him*, &c. O my God, when I think of this, I could go to the very gates of hell to preach. I thought the other day, O if I had my health, I would ſtand on the top of every hackney coach, and preach Chriſt to thoſe poor creatures. Unconverted old people, unconverted young people, will you have no

compaſſion on your own ſouls: if you will damn yourſelves, remember I am free from the blood of you all. O if it be thy bleſſed will, Lord moſt holy, O God moſt mighty, take the hearts of theſe ſinners into thy hand. Methinks I ſee the heavens opened, the Judge ſitting on his throne, the ſea boiling like a pot, and the Lord Jeſus coming to judge the world; well, if you are damned, it ſhall not be for want of calling after. O come, come, God help you to come, whilſt Jeſus is ſtanding ready to receive you. O fly to the Saviour this night for refuge; remember if you die in an unconverted ſtate you muſt be damned for ever.

O that I could but perſuade one poor ſoul to fly to Jeſus Chriſt, make him your refuge; and then, however you may be caſt down, *hope in God, and you ſhall yet praiſe him.* God help thoſe that have believed, to hope more and more in his ſalvation, till faith be turned into viſion, and hope into fruition. Even ſo, Lord Jeſus. Amen and Amen.

SERMON

SERMON XIII.

Spiritual Baptiſm.

ROMANS vi. ver. 3, 4.

Know ye not, that ſo many of us as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into death: that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life.

I BELEIVE, my dear hearers, I may venture to tell you, that the longer you live, the more you will find that the royal preacher ſpoke truth when he ſaid, *There is nothing new under the ſun*; for as God is always the ſame, ſo the world, the fleſh, and the devil will be always the ſame, frail, vile, inimical and deceitful. New ſcenes ſurprize us, not becauſe they are really new, but becauſe

cauſe they are new to us: our lives are moſtly taken up with viewing only the preſent appearance of things; we have neither time or leiſure to look back as we ought, or might, upon the events of Providence, or the effects of the doctrines of grace. I will not ſay, my thoughts always run in a religious channel, but I will ſay, I wiſh they did. The words in our text, as connected with what preceeds and follows, contain the unchangeable truths of God: nor am I any ways ſtaggered by oppoſition to the vindication of what the good old Puritans, and the Diſſenters of the preſent age, call evangelical doctrine. I do not know a man that has wrote in a legal ſtrain, or that reads, or talks in common converſation in a legal ſtrain, but diſcovers his ignorance of, if not his enmity to the doctrine of juſtification by faith alone, by charging it with very bad conſequences, and endeavouring to explode it as a dangerous doctrine, deſtructive of holineſs, which they would ſeem to patronize; though if one were always to judge of them by their calumniating practice, one would imagine they had never read with proper attention, either the preceeding or following chapters, nor that wherein is our text, which proves it to be a doctrine according

according to godlineſs, and therefore properly begins, *What ſhall we ſay then, ſhall we continue in ſin that grace may abound?* You will ſay, I have been inſiſting upon the univerſal depravity of nature, I have been bringing all down upon an equal level; that I have not only mentioned the dreadful ſtate of Heathens, but the equally dreadful ſtate of the haughty Jews, and ignorant Gentiles, one only ſinning againſt the light of nature, and the other ſinning againſt the light of revelation, by which both, in one ſenſe, ſtand on an equal footing, though the laſt, who thinks he ſtands upon higher ground, appears to be only ſuperior in ſin; why then, how muſt either or both be ſaved, ſince they have nothing to recommend them, nothing to plead as an atonement for their ſins? Here comes in the bleſſed doctrine of juſtification, by the glorious imputed righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, to be received by faith as an inſtrument by the poor convicted ſinner. If this be the caſe, *ſhall we ſin that grace may abound?* this ſerves as a foil, to ſet off the riches of grace with a greater luſtre. Is it not a very unfair deduction, to ſay never mind holineſs, but ſin that grace may abound, that God's grace may be more conſpicuous?

Pray

Pray how does the apoſtle treat this? with the utmoſt abhorrence; *God forbid*, ſays he; how dare you charge the doctrine of grace with ſuch a horrid conſequence? God forbid that it ſhould enter into our hearts; for *how ſhall we that are dead to ſin live any longer therein? Know ye not*, ſaith he, *that as many of us as were baptized into Chriſt, are baptized into his death:* therefore, ſaith he, ſo far from ſinning that grace may abound, we look upon ourſelves as *being buried with Chriſt by baptiſm into death, that like as Chriſt was raiſed from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life.* This I thought a proper ſupplement to ſome diſcourſes I have endeavoured to deliver you for ſome days laſt paſt, when treating on the credibility and authenticity of our bleſſed Lord's reſurrection.

I cannot make ſport for the devil by railing againſt infant or adult baptiſm; it is a ſtrange thing how bigots can ſet the world on fire by throwing water at one another, and that people cannot be baptized, or ſprinkled, as the others call it, without beſpattering one another, and ſhow that the chief thing they have been baptized into, are the waters of ſtrife; this is catching at ſhadows, and making ſport for

for the devil, while the combatants on both ſides, being thus engaged in throwing the ſhadowy water at one another, loſe the ſubſtantials of religion, while they are defending the outſide of it. For my part, I do not enter into the debate about infant or adult baptiſm; there has been a diſpute about the mode, as well as the ſubjects of baptiſm; perſons equally ſkilled in language, pretend to bring various texts from the original, to prove that the word *baptizo*, ſignifies either ſprinkling or plunging; and I believe you and I might as well attempt to draw two parallel lines, and bring them to meet at ſome certain place, as to bring theſe learned combatants together; for of all diſputants, religious diſputants are the moſt fiery and obſtinate; therefore, I am for thoſe that have learned to throw water upon bigotted fire, *to think, and let think,* about the mode, and conſider what it imports.

It is certain, that in the words of our text, there is an alluſion to the manner of baptiſm, which was by immerſion, which our own church allows, and inſiſts upon it, that children ſhould be immerſed in water, unleſs thoſe that bring the children to be baptized aſſure the miniſter that they cannot bear the plunging.

We will allow this then, that one was plunged when he was young, another plunged when he was old; and, in fact, when adults are plunged as they ought, it is backwards at once: but whether I am plunged in a great deal, or *buried* with a little water, as a body is when it is ſaid, *Earth to earth, aſhes to aſhes, duſt to duſt*, what ſignifies it, if I go in and come out, and continue juſt the ſame as before, unleſs you can ſay, *in Heathen and out Chriſtian*; but we ſee very often they are not one bit the better, they have not one grain of Chriſtianity more. Suppoſing a child when young grows up to a man, is ſprinkled, or dipped as the children I ſaw at Liſbon, or in our font, as they are made large enough to dip in, though now they ſprinkle; ſuppoſe one of theſe grows up a child of the devil, and ſays, I don't look upon what was done in my infancy to be baptiſm, I will be baptized really; and yet ſuppoſe alſo, that perſon takes up only the outward ſign, and both of them die and go to the devil, would it give either of them ſatisfaction to ſay, I am in hell, but I was baptized when an infant, or adult? both of them would have to lament they were tormented in the flame. Would it not be better for us to take

take care not to offend our brethren, not to raiſe one anothers ſpirits and corruptions, but rather, when we come together, talk of the heart, and enquire whether, when we received the outward ſign by ſprinkling or dipping, we really received the thing ſignified in our hearts, and exemplify that thing ſignified, in our lives.

Now pray what is the thing ſignified? we need not go farther for an anſwer than our text, *As many of them as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, were baptized into his death:* and it is worthy remarking, that our Lord told his diſciples, that they were *to baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.* Now I believe all perſons that have but a little ſkill in ſcripture interpretation, muſt allow that the word name ſignifies Chriſt; my name is in him, ſpeaking in the Old Teſtament of Chriſt's name; and when we ſay, *in or by the name*, it has a peculiar reference to every thing that belongs to God: and I verily believe that when the Redeemer ſaid, *baptize them in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt*, he not only intended to eſtabliſh the doctrine of three perſons in one God, but alſo to point out the nature of true baptiſm, namely, to be baptized into the

nature of the Father, into the nature of the Son, and into the nature of the Holy Ghoſt, and this ſeems to be the meaning of our text, *Know ye not that ſo many as were baptized*; if we have been baptized aright, have been baptized not only in the name of Chriſt, but have been baptized into Chriſt; that is, we have not only put on Chriſt in an outward profeſſion, but have been ſo baptized by the Holy Ghoſt, as to be made members of Chriſt's myſtical body, united to him by the bleſſed Spirit; ſo that in a degree, though not in every ſenſe, we are one with Chriſt, and the Father, through him. This is religion common to all, whether we are Baptiſt or Pœdo-baptiſt; for we may call one another by this and that name, it is no matter what we are called, the grand matter is, what God looks upon us to be; whether we are become by baptiſm, and with the powerful operations of the Spirit of God accompanying that ordinance, branches of Jeſus Chriſt, the true vine. It has been always an argument with me, and I may plead for the ſame liberty that I give, that I think infant-baptiſm is an ordinance of Chriſt, becauſe if our children are not to be baptized, they are left inferior in their privileges to the Jews, their

their children were circumciſed to God, and why ſhould not our children be as ſoon initiated into Chriſt as they? The apoſtle ſaith, *He is not a Jew that is one outwardly, neither is that circumciſion which is outwardly in the fleſh*, but circumciſion is *that of the heart and of the ſpirit, whoſe praiſe is not of men but of God*; ſo it may be ſaid of outward baptiſm, he is not a Chriſtian who is baptized only outwardly, but he that is baptized inwardly of the Spirit, *whoſe praiſe is not of men but of God.* When we get a proſelite, we are ſo fond of them that we hug them to death: I have got the praiſe of men eſpecially when religion walks in ſilver ſlippers; when a perſon ſays, I may get buſineſs if I get into ſuch a church, into ſuch a ſociety; a man may become religious as he may go to 'Change for trade, but he is a Chriſtian who is one inwardly, who has no worldly views, no deſigns but what are ſubordinate to the glory of God. The primitive Chriſtians gave great proof of their ſincerity, they were baptized over the dead; *what ſhall they do who are baptized for*, or over, *the dead?* notwithſtanding they ſaw their fellow-creatures murdered, they dared to go openly to be baptized; though they knew very well ſoon after, that

that for their baptiſm with water, they ſhould be baptized with fire, and yet they dared openly to avow their profeſſion of Chriſt. This is being baptized into Chriſt; well, what then? why, then we are baptized into his death. Can you tell me what that is? I cannot fully, I don't know that myſelf; and we ſhould preach according to our experience, (a man of little true grace, he will give you a little, little, little practical application; very little, becauſe he has but little himſelf; a man that has a good deal of it in his heart, he will not neglect his principles, but he will give the people a good ſound meal of practical religion) though I am but a babe in Chriſt, though I have been in Chriſt four or five and thirty years, and know but little of Chriſt, yet I think I can tell you a little what it is to be baptized into Chriſt, to be baptized into his death. Am I immediately to die in the body? that does not always follow, but we are to die daily, we are to be conformed to Chriſt's death, which we never can till we have been baptized into Chriſt; we can never die till we have been enabled by his power to die. When we talk of dying the death of Chriſt, we mean being crucified to the world with him.

I live,

I live, ſays Paul, *yet not I, but Chriſt lives in me; and the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.* Now we all come into the world alive to the world, the fleſh, and the devil. Some people ſay, a child muſt cry in order to prove itſelf an heir; what do you think it cries for? I believe ſome people think 'tis becauſe it is in pain, but I am afraid the child cries becauſe he is hurt; I believe he finds the air too cool for him; and the firſt thing he does, is giving a proof of original ſin to his parents, and all the attendants about him: this is called in ſcripture, the old man; and however ſome may find fault with the Church of England, and its forms (perhaps they may be mended, but I queſtion whether we have men capable of mending them now-a-days, either for zeal or ſpiritual knowledge) yet I am ſure there is ſomething in it very good, particularly there is that prayer to be put up by a child, deſerves to be written in letters of gold, *Grant, O Lord, that all things belonging to the old man may die in me*; and then follows (what I ſhall ſpeak of by and by) *and all belonging to the new man may live and grow in me.* There is the whole ſum and ſubſtance of religion, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning,

ginning, the middle, and the end, as Mr. Ambroſe's works are intitled. We want nothing but all things belonging to the old man to die in us, and all things belonging to the new to live, to make us fit for the kingdom of Chriſt; and if we can find this in us, God grant we may not quarrel one with another, though I verily believe young men think the old man is very troubleſome. There is one does not live very far from hence, who is a very worthy man, I remember a few years ago he came in, in his firſt love, ſaying, "he had got on the mount; the fire burnt upwards, though there was a good deal of ſmoak. Pray, ſays I, is the old man dead yet? no, ſaid he, he is not quite dead, but ſpoke as if he thought he was expiring; ſays I, I will ſpeak to you three or four years hence. Some time after that, meeting him, I aſked him concerning the old man, he ſaid, he thought he was alive and worſe than ever, and that he was a ſly creature, would lie down as if he was aſleep, that he may attack you when off your guard the better." I heard of a good man in the country, who ſaid, he found his corruptions were a monſter of a thouſand heads; now this is called a crucifixion, which is a painful and a

gradual

gradual death, but a certain death: God forbid any of you now ſhould turn the food into poiſon, ſaying, this is a very good doctrine, I like it; the miniſter ſays the old man dies ſlow, ſo I will not crucify him; they tell me he will die by and by, but not yet, ſo I will not trouble myſelf much about him; why then, my dear hearer, whoever thou art, thou talkeſt like a ſtinking hypocrite, or a rank, vile Antinomian; how, how, is the old man ſuch a pleaſant companion, that you love to have him dwelling under your roof? would you chuſe to have a parcel of whores and rogues to live in your houſes? would you like, if you lived by letting of lodgings, two or three rooms ſuppoſe, to have a parcel of thieves and robbers, and pickpockets, come and tell you their profeſſion, would it not be fooliſh for you to let ſuch people in, would it not? and juſt ſuch fools you are to let pickpockets, ſtreet-robbers, God-robbers, vile proſtitutes in your wicked hearts, the luſts of the fleſh, the luſts of the eye, and the pride of life, ſtay not only till quarter-day, but long after: before you turn them out, you may be dead; no, no, it is not an inſtantaneous, but a gradual, progreſſive work.

Then we are baptized into Christ, when we study to glorify Christ; that is the reason that God Almighty sends you so many trials, that you may be baptized into his death; and generally you will find, when you have had most communications from God, that some cross trials soon follow. Hast thou been praying for resignation? perhaps God takes away a beloved child; you have been praying for great patience, perhaps a cross wife, a Nabal of a husband, bad servants, undutiful children, or something or other, and the devil at the head of them, making you uneasy, so that you find you have not so much patience as you thought you had; you never was upon the mount in your lives, but when you came down, you were tempted to break the tables: was it not so with Moses after forty days communion with God? down he came, and seeing the people dancing round the calf, down he throws the tables, and breaks them all to pieces; and if God was not to keep us, after all our communion with him, we should break the tables to pieces and be damned. After all that person then is dying every day, who looks upon himself every morning as one that is to be crucified afresh, that looks for

crosses,

croſſes, and at the ſame time walks ſo inoffenſively as to bring no croſs upon himſelf. I ſpoke to a perſon yeſterday about the croſs; pray ſir, ſays he, would you have me bring a croſs upon myſelf; no, ſaid I, only be honeſt, and you will find croſſes enough.

Then we muſt be raiſed to newneſs of life, as Chriſt was raiſed from the dead by the glory of the Father; this points out to us in what ſenſe Jeſus Chriſt is the reſurrection and the life, and ſhews us that every thing Jeſus Chriſt did and ſuffered, muſt be ſpiritually experienced in our hearts. You have often heard me ſay, as he was born in the Virgin's womb, he muſt be born in our hearts, and as he died for ſin, we muſt die to ſin, as he roſe again, we muſt riſe to newneſs of heart and life. What is the new birth? ſays a great doctor: ſuppoſe any of theſe doctors were to come to any woman when her travelling pains were upon her, and ſhe was crying out, and labour pains came on faſter and faſter, and they ſhould ſtand preaching at the door, and ſay, good woman, theſe are only metaphorical pains, this is only a bold expreſſion of the Eaſterns, it is only metaphorical, I queſtion whether the woman would not wiſh the doctors ſome of

theſe metaphorical pains for talking ſo, which they would find real ones; though ſhe could not read ſhe might feel. But notwithſtanding the reality of the new birth, and the pains that attend it, yet they ſay it is only a metaphorical thing. I am of an odd temper, and of ſuch a temper, that I heartily wiſh they may be put under the pangs of the new birth, and know what it is by their own experience, know there is nothing in nature more real than the new birth. The apoſtle Paul ſaid, *I travel in birth till Chriſt be formed in you:* now don't you think the apoſtle had this metaphorical expreſſion of ſomething real; the apoſtle's travelling in birth muſt be ſomething analogous to the natural birth; muſt I ſay there is no ſuch thing as pangs becauſe I don't feel them: I am fearfully and wonderfully made, that my ſoul knows right well; and in reſpect to the new birth we may ſay, I am fearfully and wonderfully redeemed by Chriſt, and renewed by the Holy Ghoſt; the new life imparts new principles, a new underſtanding, a new will and new affections, a renewed conſcience, a renewed memory, nay, a renewed body, by making it the temple of the living God, an habitation of God through the Spirit, and walking

walking in newneſs of life; if I am not miſtaken, it implies a progreſſive motion, going from ſtrength to ſtrength, from one degree of grace to another, paſſing from glory to glory, for grace is only glory in the bud, till grace is ſwallowed up in endleſs glory. A perſon that walks, though he may not walk equally faſt as others, yet may get ground: hence, *not to go forward is to go backward.* Enoch walked with God; it beſpoke the habitual tendency of his heart, the actual exerciſe of grace, that he was kept in a lively frame, walked with God among a very wicked generation, dared to be good when all were wicked around him, and he was ſo favoured, as to be tranſlated to heaven; this was the caſe with Elijah. *Moſes*, ſays the Lord, *go up to the mount and die:* God made him undreſs himſelf, and put on his own grave cloaths, gives him a ſight of Canaan, but to let him know that he even to the very laſt would chaſtiſe his people, when he is even taking them to heaven; tells him, thou ſhalt not go into the earthly Canaan, but I will take thee to the heavenly one, which is far better. Being baptized into the death of Chriſt, beſpeaks the habitual tendency and practice of the heart and life; the old man muſt die,

die, hence the new man muſt live; it muſt be emptied of ſelf, that there may be more and more room for God: now I appeal to your hearts, how far you have experienced this. I believe the world pretty well knows the temper of my mind, both in reſpect to politics and church-government, and church-principles: I am a profeſſed avower of moderation, and I heartily wiſh that all who are concerned in church and ſtate, may particularly take care to let their moderation be known to all men, for if we quarrel with one another, we ſhall only make ſport for the devil, and occaſion deſtruction. I don't care whether you go to church or meeting; I am, I profeſs, a member of the church of England, and if they will not let me preach in the church, I will preach any where; all the world is my pariſh, and I will preach wherever God gives me an opportunity, but you will never find me diſputing about the outward appendages of religion; don't tell me you are a Baptiſt, an Independant, a Preſbyterian, a Diſſenter, tell me you are a Chriſtian, that is all I want; this is the religion of heaven, and muſt be ours upon earth; I ſay, are there any of you under the gallery, or in the green-ſeat, or any where,

I will

I will try to find you out before I have done my ſermon, though you are come in the dark.

But I will juſt at preſent ſpeak to you who underſtand the goſpel, to you that are my brethren, though, in all probability, my elder brethren in the goſpel. Methinks there is ſomething ſolemn in meeting in the evening, ſomething ſolemn in coming to worſhip after we have been in the labours of the day; and I verily believe, that when weekly preaching is baniſhed from London, that all Chriſtianity will be baniſhed, it cannot be very long after it, there have been ſuch inſtances, you may die before to-morrow. I think a good tradeſman, whether he deals largely or not, will take care to keep his day-book well; if a man will not keep his day-book well, it is ten to one but he loſes a good deal when he comes to count up his things at Chriſtmas; now I take it for granted, a good ſpiritual tradeſman will keep his ſpiritual day-book well: can you ſay, this day I hope I have died a little more to the world than yeſterday, this day I hope I have been a little more alive to God than I was yeſterday; and yet when I look upon my family, whether a man trades wholeſale or retail, when he finds he has done but little

little buſineſs that day, great going out, and little coming in. I hope when you die but little daily, that you go to bed begging pardon, and begging grace, that you may die more to yourſelves and the world, and live more to God to-morrow; for I am ſure I can call you to witneſs, that you never lived ſo comfortably as when you lived near to God; you may as well pretend to ſay, that a perſon in a cold winter's day is warmeſt when he keeps from the fire, as to ſay, a ſoul can live near to God when he does not die daily to ſin. O, ſays one, don't tell me of your frames, don't mind them; I will tell you of them, *don't mind your frames*, I don't in reſpect to juſtification, but I will to the well-being and comfort of my ſoul: a man that has got but very little ſpirits may be alive, but there is a wide difference between having a diſorder that one can hardly ſpeak, having no ſpirits at all, or but very few, and having ſolid health: God grant we may be healthy Chriſtians; the more you live to God, the more you will have health; be not angry with me; aſſure yourſelves a lukewarm Chriſtian does more hurt to religion, than all the open infidels in the kingdom; we have God himſelf aſſerting this, *Thou art neither*

hot

hot nor cold, I would thou waſt either cold or hot, but becauſe thou art neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm, I will ſpew thee out of my mouth; what an expreſſion is that! what a nauſeous thing is lukewarm water to a ſick ſtomach! *I will come and remove my candleſtick from you.* Therefore, I believe, it is the opinion of all judicious men, that if we ſhould have a ſevere rod of correction to ſtir us up, it is becauſe of the lukewarmneſs of moſt Chriſtians: my brethren, God make us all alive to Chriſt to-night; come, come, if your ſoul is for Chriſt, to arms, to arms, put on your cockades, you that have them in your pockets, for fear you ſhould be known to be Chriſt's. O you cowards; many ſoldiers put off their cockades, as if they were not ſoldiers; as many of our clergy affect to dreſs like the laity, that they may go to the plays, that the orange-women may not know them, and they don't care whether God ſees them or no. I deſire you will all appear in your proper dreſſes, let us ſee it is painted on the breaſt-plates of your hearts, by the bleſſed monitor, the eternal Spirit of God; I don't want you to wear them as the Papiſts, upon your faces, no; you that are for infant-baptiſm, were ſigned with the ſign of the

croſs, for what? that you might, when you came of age, *prove Chriſt's faithful ſoldiers to the end:* God grant, the nearer we come to the end the bolder we may be for Chriſt.

If there be any of you here that are formaliſts, *that have a name to live and are dead*, the Lord grant, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who was raiſed from the dead by the glory of his Father, cauſe a ſtirring among theſe dry bones. Think what it will be to go to hell to-night, to want a drop of water, wherewith you was ſprinkled, to cool your tongues in hell; think what it will be to go to hell by the way of heaven, which is the worſt way you can take; think what it will be to be juſt at the threſhold, and not have religion enough to take you over; my heart bleeds for you. Had you a ſon, a father, a mother, a relation, to be tried at the Old-Bailey this ſeſſions, how would you be concerned, how carefully would you enquire when your relation would be tried, how anxious would you be to hear whether he is condemned or no; and if ſomebody was to come to tell you, now he is about to be tried and caſt, and now the judge is going to put his cap on, to paſs ſentence on him; how would you bear it? I believe ſome of you would drop a tear, and

ſay,

ſay, O that this poor creature ſhould be born for this; and can you blame a poor miniſter of Chriſt, a poor ſinner that has been redeemed by the blood of Chriſt, and I humbly believe and hope, has been made a partaker of the Spirit, will you blame me for being concerned for you, my brethren and my ſiſters, for you and I ſprung from one father and mother, Adam and Eve, the common parents of us all; can you blame me for pouring out my ſoul, can you blame me for ſpeaking a little home, when the Judge is juſt ready to mount the throne, when the books are open, when I ſee the elements melting with fervent heat, when I ſee all nature concurring to uſher in the awful coming of the Son of God. Sinners in Zion, baptized heathens, profeſſors but not poſſeſſors, formaliſts, believing unbelievers, talking of Chriſt, talking of grace, orthodox in your creeds, but heterodox in your lives, turn ye, turn ye, Lord help you to turn to him, turn ye to Jeſus Chriſt, and may God turn you inſide out to-night; may the power of the higheſt overſhadow you, and may that glorious Father that raiſed Chriſt from the dead, raiſe your dead ſouls. Turn the text into a prayer, go home and ſay, for what purpoſe have I

lived? into what have I been baptized? I have not ſo much as yet been baptized into Jordan; I have never led a life one day of reformation but when I was obliged to it: bleſs God that you are not now among the damned; bleſs God that you are not now howling in hell; bleſs the Lord that Jeſus ſtands with pitying eyes, and outſtretched arms to receive you now; will you go with the man? will you accept of Chriſt? will you begin to live now? may God ſay, Amen; may God paſs by, not in anger but in love; may he, as he hath hitherto ſeen you in your blood, has ſaid to you, live, and has preſerved you in your natural ſtate, may that ſame God of love, mercy, and life, paſs by you, and caſt the ſkirts of his love over you, and ſay to you dead ſinners, come forth, live a life of faith on earth, live a life of viſion in heaven; even ſo, Lord Jeſus. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON XIV.

Neglect of Chriſt the killing Sin.

JOHN v. ver. 40.

And ye will not come to me that ye may have life.

THE great apoſtle of the Gentiles, after he had ſet before the Hebrews the great cloud of witneſſes of Old Teſtament believers, exhorts them to look higher, even to Jeſus the common Saviour, and that not tranſiently, but earneſtly and conſtantly, in his mediatorial character of humiliation, as enduring unheard of, unparallelled contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf; *leaſt*, ſays he, *ye be weary, and faint in your minds.* If we had not ſuch an example ſet before us, and brought to us by the Holy Ghoſt in a ſuffering hour, we ſhould never hold out to the end: this was not the contradiction of the openly profane and ſcandalous, thoſe that were without,

out, ſo much as from thoſe that were within the pale of the church, even thoſe to whom were committed the lively oracles of God, who had not only the very bible in their own hands, but were ſet apart to explain it to others. That the words of our text were ſpoken to them, appears from the preceeding verſe, in which he bids them *ſearch the ſcriptures*; as a perſon digs for a mine, or ſearches for ſome hidden treaſure. The word bible, or book which I have in my hand, is well applied to the holy ſcriptures, becauſe it is the book of God, written by him, that is, by his order, and by thoſe who were inſpired by him for that end; and yet, of all writings in the world, theſe are moſt neglected! God has condeſcended to become an author, and yet people will not read his writings. There are very few that ever gave this book of God, the grand charter of ſalvation, one fair reading through: though we profeſs to have aſſented to the truth of ſcripture, as our Lord ſaid, *in them we think we have eternal life*, yet moſt read them as they would a proclamation, a romance, a play, or novels, that help only to bring them to the devil, but chuſe not to read God's book, which is to be our guide to glory; *they are they*, ſays Chriſt,

which

which teſtify of me: Lord God convert and change our hearts.

However, this was ſpoken in reference to the Old Teſtament, and certainly ſhows us, that Chriſt is the treaſure hid in that field, yet as there are equal proofs of the divinity of the New Teſtament, the word Holy Scriptures include both, eſpecially as Chriſt is the anti-type of all the types, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all divine revelation: would to God he was your Alpha and Omega too! Now, ſaith Chriſt, you pretend to reverence the ſcriptures; you that are ſet apart as perſons learned in the ſcriptures, ye Scribes, ye lawyers, ſuch as were mentioned in the goſpel to-day. I fancy ſome people think, that when we read of lawyers in the ſcriptures, that we mean ſuch lawyers as ours, who deal only in the civil and common law, but they were thoſe that opened and explained the law to the people; theſe were the perſons who thought and profeſſed, that in them they had eternal life, that they teſtify of Chriſt the great Prophet that was promiſed in the ſcriptures to come into the world; yet, ſaith our divine maſter, to theſe very profeſſors, theſe maſters in Iſrael, *ye will not come to me that*

ye

ye may have life: though I am now present with you, though I am now come to explain the scriptures, and fulfil them, am now come to proclaim to you that life, that eternal life, which the scriptures declare were to be published and proclaimed by me, yet *ye will not come unto me that ye may have life.*

By eternal life we are to understand, all the blessings of a converted state, particularly the pardon of sins, not only before conversion but after. It is impossible but there should be sin every day and every hour in every professing person. My dear hearers, as I shall not have an opportunity for some time to speak to you, I don't chuse, especially when I am about to take my leave of you, to speak any thing that is severe, but I assure you without attempting to offend, with a broken heart I assure you, that this was the treatment Jesus Christ met with of old, and, God knows, this is the treatment Jesus Christ meets with now: *ye will not come to me that ye may have eternal life.*

If I am not mistaken, and I think I am not, the words suppose, that they and we are all dead in sin, for if we are not, I do not know why we need come to have life; and I mention this, because for want of believing and knowing

ing this, ſome that pretend to know Chriſt and to preach him, forget to lay the proper foundation, original ſin; and that there is no ability or inclination in the heart of a natural man, ſo much as to do any thing ſpiritual; he is ſtupid and dead. But if we have eyes to ſee, if we have ears to hear, and if our hearts are not waxed hard, doubtleſs it would appear as clear to us as the ſun ſhining in its meridian brightneſs, that man was dead till God breathed into him the breath of life, and then he became a living ſoul. I know ſome people believe that the words mean this, that God breathed into man, and he became a natural living ſoul, like other animals, but then they don't conſider what a life God did breath into the ſoul, he breathed into it the life of God, a ſpiritual life was breathed into the ſoul; it is expreſſed in the ſtrongeſt, but at the ſame time in the moſt conciſe terms that is poſſible, none but God, none but a man inſpired by God, could ſay ſo much in ſo few words; it ſhows great ſkill in men to ſay ſo much in a little; what uninſpired man ever wrote ſo as Moſes did? Now Moſes when he penned the ſcriptures, ſaid, *God made man after his own image*, and you know ten thouſand volumes

could not have said more than that. How long do you think it was that man continued in his original purity? I don't know that I ever yet heard, that any one thought he continued in his blessed state so long as from Saturday to Saturday. Mr. Boston, who, perhaps, is one of the best writers that ever Scotland produced, says, that there is an allusion in one of the Psalms to man's sudden fall, *Man being* born *in honour, continued not*; i. e. but a night before he fell. O much good may do those that boast of their free-will, that think they can stand by a power of their own, when father Adam, who had no corruption, did not stand a week, perhaps not two days; and how can we pretend to stand, let us have what grace we will, when that grace has so much corruption to oppose it? if Jesus Christ did not take care to secure our standing, we should fall to our ruin. Adam fell, and being our federal head, we fell in him. Why, says a Deist, and too many professors also, pray what business had God Almighty to make our fall or our standing depend on another? you will not object to this you church of England men, will you? then why have you god-fathers and god-mothers to promise for you? why have

we

we members of parliament to be the heads of the people, and what the parliament does, the people do, you have conſtituted them your heads and repreſentatives, you muſt ſtand and fall by them; ſo if you are bound for a perſon, you muſt ſtand and fall with him, muſt not you? I remember one of the miniſters that preached the morning exerciſes, when moſt, if not all the churches in this city, were filled with goſpel-preachers, till on Bartholomew-day near 2,500 of them in the whole were turned out, and the other miniſters that did not preach the goſpel continued till the plague came, and then they ran away, and left the pulpits to thoſe that were turned out, who were willing to go into them, though they expected the plague would ſeize them in preaching Chriſt there; one of thoſe miniſters ſays, ſuppoſe God had choſe all that were to be created, and to proceed from the loins of Adam, had been preſent, and that he ſhould have ſaid to them, I have been ſeven days employed in preparing the whole creation; I have made a garden, and will have one choſe by you to dwell in it, as my vicegerent and your repreſentative here below; here is Adam, the father of you all, whom I have bleſſed

with a partner, that is bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, a creature like himself; all that I desire of your head and representative is, that he abstains from yonder tree, of every other tree in the garden he may freely eat except that; this I ordain as a test of his obedience, to see whether it is fulfilled, and you shall all stand or fall by this; who shall be the man? would they not all say, our first parent to be sure. O there is not a single man but would have chosen Adam to be their representative, they would rather stand and fall by him than by any body else; now pray why should we quarrel with him for acting in the manner we ourselves should have done, had we been in his situation? *God*, saith the apostle, *included all under sin.* What is sin but a breach, that is, a transgression of the law; *the wages of sin is death*; every transgression of the law incurs damnation. Have we eaten of the forbidden fruit? we must die, we are legally dead; and there is not a little child in the world that is not. It is enough to make the parents pray night and day for their children; there is not a child born but, to use the words of our own church, brings in with it corruption, which renders it liable to the wrath of

God

God forever. Then, ſay ſome, it is true what I have heard ſay of you, that there are little children in hell a ſpan long; I never had ſuch a thought in my life; I never believed that any infants, black or white, were damned in hell. I think a poor child, though it is born in a ſtate of original ſin, and I have ofren thought *that* is the reaſon why little children are ſeized with ſuch terrible diſorders as often carry them out of the world, with ten times more agony than parents feel; a great proof of man's offence. We ſee a poor little infant ſoon after it is born, in two or three months taken with fits, lie ſcreaming and ſtruggling, while the diſtreſſed parents are breaking their hearts, and wiſhing, though they love it dearly, that God would take it out of its pain. Is not this a ſtrong proof that man is fallen from God? elſe who can tell what God deſigns hereby: however, I verily believe that by his grace he fits them for heaven. We have broken God's law, and are liable to eternal condemnation, we are therefore legally dead, every one of us without diſtinction; we are all upon a level, from the greateſt king in the world, who has it in his power to write death or life upon the poor condemned malefactors; bring him to

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the bar of God's holy law, and it will tell him there, thou art the malefactor in the sight of God, thou thyself, and thus God is glorified. It is not greatness of station, nor external differences, that make a difference in the internal state of the soul. A nobleman may come with his star and garter to the king's bar, and be tried by his peers at Westminster-hall, and may be attended from the Tower by some of the king's officers, but whether a nobleman be tried at Westminster-hall, or a criminal in rags at the Old-Bailey, the law must be executed upon both: this is our state towards God, we have lived in trespasses and sins, are legally dead now; is that all? Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, says, that all the loss we have had by the fall is, that our misery is temporary. Alas! alas! when Arminians talk of the fall, you will find very few of them have courage enough to stab themselves. Conscience makes them cowards; they have lost all by Adam's fall. What death have we suffered, not only legally but spiritually dead; what do I mean by that? why, that we are deprived of that life of God in which we originally stood. Have you ever seen any body die? I have. Have you ever seen one of your friends die?

die? have you ever ſtole into the room, and looked but once at the dear object of your love, the partner of your life, but wait till the next day, and eſpecially in the ſummer ſeaſon, and ſee how changed! the laſt object I ſaw, put me in mind of the fall I ſaw nature in. O what a change! the glory is departed!

But beſides this legal death, there is a ſpiritual death, and the conſequence of that is eternal death; if I die in that ſtate I muſt die for ever; that is, I muſt be a creature living eternally baniſhed from God: if I be annihilated when I die, then, indeed, temporal death is all; but it is not ſo, I am to live in another world; the wiſeſt man upon earth tells us, that there is a future ſtate; and therefore by legal and ſpiritual death, I am liable to death eternal. I have the longer inſiſted on this, becauſe it is impoſſible to know, or to value that life that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to impart to us and procure for us, without conſidering the nature of the death he delivers us from.

Now let us attend to what our Lord ſays, *Ye will not come to me that ye may have life*; in the tenth chapter he ſays, *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it*

more

more abundantly; now what life is that? to be sure, the life which a malefactor wants, who is tried by a Jury; why, he wants to have the chain taken off; what do you and I want? for we may want to eternity if we plead our innocence; there is not one of us but must plead guilty before God; well, what must I do? why, if ever I have life, I must be acquitted, something must pronounce me not guilty; my conscience says, guilty; why, then Jesus Christ came that we might have a legal life, that we might be acquitted from all that condemnation which we are under by our breaking his law; so far the remedy answers to the disease; but the remedy would not be extensive enough if that was all; therefore, it was an excellent answer a poor woman made at the Old-Bailey, I heard of it twenty years ago: she was brought sick to the bar to receive a pardon; the judge said, Woman, his majesty has given you a pardon: My lord, says she, I thank his majesty for a pardon, and you for pronouncing it, but that is not all I want; what my poor soul wants is, a pardon from Jesus Christ; what signifies a pardon from a judge, if I have a disease in me that will kill me? whether I am pardoned or not, I must have my disease cured,

cured, that the pardon may do me good. I thought it a ſtrange plea of a man, a captain of a ſhip, that I heard tried ſome years ago for throwing a poor negro overboard; he aſked the ſurgeon, do you think that the child will die? Sir, ſaid he, it will not live above an hour; then, ſays he, you may let it down now: O, ſays the judge, you have murdered the child. I muſt have a pardon from my God, or I am damned; and if I have loſt the divine image, which was the original dignity of man, I ſhall never get to glory without the reſtoration of that image I have loſt by my ſin. Spiritual life in the heart, is that which comes from Jeſus Chriſt, and this is the life of God in the ſoul of man; it is not a metaphorical but a real thing, a reſurrection to life by the power of Chriſt, *who is the reſurrection and the life*, ſo there is a connection between a legal and a ſpiritual life; the type and antitype anſwers as face anſwers to face in water: thus as all in Adam have died, ſo all in Jeſus Chriſt, the ſecond Adam, are made alive. We are apt to think that ſuch a one, and ſuch a one, were found Chriſtians and gone to heaven, but there is a great deal of falſe charity in the world; without this life we are all undone.

Now, my brethren, if this is the case, how must I have my life in glory? how must a dead creature be a Christian? how must a sinner that is spiritually dead have divine life? and how must a creature, every moment liable to death eternal, be made eternally alive? can any body answer that question? will reason tell me? no; will philosophy help me? no; for if *the world by wisdom knew not God*, surely, the world by wisdom knows not how to turn to God; therefore, you will find the greatest scholars the greatest fools, proudest deists, and most scornful atheists; for knowledge puffeth up; and if bare knowledge makes a Christian, the devil must be very good, he is the most knowing, and yet the most wicked. The only way to get this life restored, is to come to Jesus Christ; *ye will not come unto me*, saith our text, *that ye may have life*; implying, that without coming to him they cannot have life: *there is no other name given under heaven whereby we can be saved, but that of Jesus Christ. I am the way, the truth, and the life. I am the resurrection and the life*, saith the Lord. In order to have this life, we must come to Christ for it: I hope you don't think coming to Christ, means coming to see his person, that can never be;

be: for our Lord talks of coming to him when he himſelf was the preacher, and they were all about him; though ſo many round him, yet there was but one that touched him. A great many people ſay, dear, if Chriſt was here, how would I careſs him! I would let him in! when, perhaps, at the ſame time turn out one of his members. Would you like to ſee Jeſus Chriſt with a parcel of boys and girls running before him, a parcel of poor fiſhermen with him, and Mary Magdalen, with a mob of poor people and publicans following him? we have got the ſame ſpirit the people had then, we ſhould hoot at him and deſpiſe him, as the Phariſees did. A great many people think coming to Chriſt is to come to the ſacrament; you know very well I love that privilege; and one of the greateſt afflictions I have is, that my health will not permit me to attend all the ordinances; but thouſands come to ordinances, that have no view of the God of ordinances in them, therefore you will find, that in all our public places it is as much the faſhion to go to public worſhip about eleven o'clock, as any where elſe. They are not up time enough to their mattins; they go and ſay, we thank God, who has brought us to

the beginning of this day, and that when perhaps the clock ſtrikes twelve, and they juſt up; thus people go to church as to a play, to ſee and be ſeen, and as ſoon as they go out of church, they aſk where they are to go to next, and what party? Thouſands go to church, or to meeting, and ſacrament, and don't come to Chriſt: come and like this preaching, and numbers who are called fools for following us, eat the fragments that are left, that hear preaching, eat the fiſh and the loaves, and are only feaſting upon ſhadows and not upon Chriſt: this ſhould make us extremely careful to examine whether we ever came to Chriſt or no. A great moral preacher ſays of our preaching, when all their ſtock is out, then they cry come, come, come, and that is the burden of their ſong, ſay they; and I hope that will be the burden of our ſong till Chriſt ſays, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father*; what would you have us ſay? O, ſay you, bid a man do and live, ſo we will; and in the ſame ſenſe Chriſt in the goſpel ſays, thou art dead; what ſhall I do, ſays the man, to inherit eternal life? thou knoweſt our Lord ſaid to him, Keep the law. Our Lord always ſpoke to the people in their own language; that is, thou

ſhalt

ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; he began with morality at the right place, we begin at the fifth commandment. The great morality, ſays Dr. Young, is beginning with the love of God. *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf*; *thou haſt anſwered right*, ſays he, *do this, and thou ſhalt live.* Whoever loves the Lord God as he ought to do, with all his ſoul and ſtrength, ſhall certainly live; but our Lord takes pains to convince him of his ignorance and folly; ſays he, *who is my neighbour?* as to the love of God, he had no thought of that. Thus we deceive our own ſouls, till Jeſus Chriſt opens our eyes. What muſt we come to Chriſt for? to be acquitted; come to his blood to be pardoned; you muſt believe on him, not only with a bare ſpeculative belief, that the devil has, and all the damned in hell, but to have his blood applied and brought home to the ſoul; we muſt come to him as the author and finiſher of our faith. Did not you juſt now ſay, I believe in the Holy Ghoſt, the Lord and giver of life; and the form of baptiſm is in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; it means, baptize them into the nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt: and I remember about three or four and thirty

years

years ago, a friend mentioned that word in private converſation to me, we tranſlate it, we believe in God; ſaid he, we ſhould tranſlate it, *we believe it in God*, for we never do till God has put his faith in us, then we have in our ſouls a new life in Chriſt, then we live a life of faith; *the life I now live is by faith in the Son of God. I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me.* In order to this I muſt come to Jeſus Chriſt, and believe on him for life eternal, the earneſt of which eternal life I muſt have in my heart before I can be aſſured I do believe on him. O, my dear hearers, do we think of this, this is no new doctrine; I ſet out, bleſſed be God, with this doctrine. The ſecond ſermon I ever made, the ſecond ſermon I ever preached, was on theſe words, *He that is in Chriſt is a new creature:* I was then about twenty years and a half old. The next ſermon I preached was upon, *Ye are juſtified*; the next ſermon, *Ye are glorified*; which ſhows, that though I am near fifty-five years old, yet, I thank my God, I am ſo far from changing my principles, which I am ſure I was taught by God's word and Spirit, that I am more and more confirmed, that if I was to die this moment, I hope I ſhould have

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ſtrength and courage given me to ſay, I am more convinced of the efficacy and the power of thoſe truths which I preached when I was twenty years old, when I firſt preached them.

Now, my dear hearers, what could enter into the heart of any perſon in the world, to reject ſuch a ſalvation as this? can you think that when a king ſaith to a priſoner, let him go, he would refuſe it? there are ſome perſons that refuſe Chriſt. I remember when, by the bounty of the people here, we begged for the poor, one man went to the turnpike and ſaid, this is Dr. Whitefield's bread and be damned. Human nature, what is it without Chriſt, the bread of life! We will not come to him that we may have life, though we may have it for aſking; no, not for life eternal, as a free gift: we will not come to Chriſt and accept it at his hand; we *will* not: it is not ſaid, we *ſhall* not, but we *will* not. Pray why will not people come to Chriſt to have life? becauſe they do not think that they are dead, and do not want it; remember when you ſay, *you are rich and increaſed in goods*, that you know not, ſaith Chriſt, that *ye are poor and miſerable, and blind and naked.* We do not ſee ourſelves fallen creatures, we do not

not know that: God give thee to know and feel, that *there is no name given under heaven whereby we can be saved, but Jesus Christ.* What, saith one, must I have inward feeling? what would the polite world do without feeling? do you think they would go to the playhouse and places of public diversion without feeling? if I can feel other things that do not concern religion, how can I come to God till I feel a need of him. We don't chuse to come to Christ, because we don't chuse to have him as a free gift; we don't like to come to him as poor and needy. I remember I heard an excellent minister of Christ in Scotland, one Mr. Wallis, of Dundee, preaching upon these words, *Behold I stand at the door and knock,* says he. Christ comes knocking at the door to come into your houses, but you will not come down to accept of his mercy. When the prodigal said, *I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto him, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants:* now you think that it was very humble in him, he who was a son of the head of the house, to be willing to be a servant. 'Tis true he says, I will go to my father's

ther's houſe, but at the ſame time he ſays, I will work for my living, he ſhall not maintain me for nothing; but when he comes to his father, he is quite brought down, he ſays, *I have ſinned againſt heaven and in thy ſight*; the joyful father claſps him in his withered arms, and takes the poor ragged wanderer home. The lawyers and other Jews thought they were righteous, and therefore they would not come to Jeſus Chriſt. Our Lord ſpoke of the Phariſees, who truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, and would not come to him that they might have life; and if we truſt in ourſelves, neither ſhall we. Our Lord ſays, *I receive not honour from men. How can you come to him, that receive honour one of another? Honour to whom honour is due.* To ſuch as are in power, whether in church or ſtate, reſpect is due to their outward ſituation. I am for no levelling principles at all; but, my brethren, at the ſame time there is a fault, that we love to be applauded. There is no going to heaven, ſaith Mr. Gurnal, without wearing a fool's cap and a fool's coat, and there is no going to heaven without being accounted fools: ſo you ſee many profeſſors follow the world, they have not courage enough to live

in holy non-conformity to the world; and many people are frightned from Christ, because they would not be counted Methodists; the fear of man has damned thousands. You will not come to him, because you cannot trust God, and then we love the world more than Christ. *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* If I had the management of people, their shops would be open three or four hours before they are now; I do not want to hinder mens business; those that have most money and most power, if they acted as they ought to do, would be the greatest slaves to their fellow-creatures. When I talk of loving the world, I mean an inordinate love: I may live in the world, and not live upon it; my heart may be towards God: the love of the world is to be renounced, and therefore they will not come to Jesus Christ they think, till they are going out of the world. If you are one of those who hate Christ, why you are the man that will not come to him: why, say you, does any body hate Christ? pray hold your tongue, for fear of discovering your ignorance: O, say you, God forbid I should hate him. But, my dear soul, learn from this time forward, that every

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one of us by nature hates Jeſus Chriſt: we ſent this meſſage to him; we will not have this man to reign over us, we hate him becauſe he is deſpiſed, we hate him becauſe of the appearance of the people that are his followers, we hate him becauſe of the narrowneſs of the way we are to paſs in to him, becauſe we muſt part with our luſts; we hate him becauſe we muſt be non-conformiſts: I hate that rag of the whore of Babylon, O that form of prayer, O all that ſtuff, I thank God I was born a Diſſenter, I love to be a Puritan, I don't love rites and ceremonies, no not in the church, and yet, perhaps, are more conformed to the world than numbers of the church, and have nothing but rites and ceremonies about their houſes and families. What do we more than others? a churchman ſhould prove himſelf a churchman, by having his articles, and keeping up the practice of religion; and a Diſſenter ſhould prove himſelf one, not by diſſenting from the church, but from the *luſts of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life*, and then we ſhall agree very well together, though one went to a place called a church, and another to a place called a meeting: would to God every ſoul now preſent would put this

queſtion to himſelf, Am I come to Chriſt, or am I not? There is a great number of perſons here, you have heard of Providence calling me abroad, no doubt curioſity brings many of you here, to hear what the poor babler ſays: I tell you what I will ſay to you, that without you have an intereſt in the Son of God, you muſt be damned. *Examine yourſelves whether you are in the faith*, whether your religion reaches any further than the church-door, whether you are the inward court worſhippers: conſcience, conſcience, conſcience, thou faithful monitor, God help thee to give a proper verdict. When I had the honour of opening lady Huntingdon's chapel, as I turned about I obſerved over my head were theſe words, *Earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord:* O that every earthly ſoul may hear God's word this day. Don't be angry with me, I am now upon the decline of life, going toward threeſcore, ſurely now I may claim leave to ſpeak to you freely; after next Sunday, perhaps, you may never hear me any more, though I do not intend to live abroad, but return, if pleaſe God, in a proper time, but long before that thou mayſt be in hell or heaven. As the Lord lives, in whoſe name I ſpeak,

ſpeak, if you will not come to Chriſt to have life, you muſt come to his bar to hear him pronounce you damned to all eternity. If you come to him that you may have life, *Come, ye bleſſed*, will be the ſentence there, but if you refuſe now, *Depart, ye curſed*, will be your ſentence then from the Lord, for in a little while he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry. Hark! hark! don't you hear him, don't you hear him, don't you hear him yonder; hark! methinks I hear him, what does he ſay? ſee yonder, don't you ſee, good people, that yonder ſun is darkened, and the moon turned into blood. *O, who can abide the day of his coming?* O, to think of his coming, may the ſinner ſay, when I know his coming is only to damn my ſoul! How do the murderers dread the aſſizes, but pardoned ſinners, pardoned criminals, are glad when they hear the high-ſheriff coming: O, ſay they, I long to go to the bar, becauſe I am going there only to plead the king's pardon. Happy, happy, happy you, that have come to this Jeſus Chriſt that you might have life, that you might walk becoming him in your life and converſation. O, Chriſt will come, and come to you as his children; but God grant this life

may

may be displayed in you and me more and more! If we are helped to know that Christ came that we might have life, and might have it more abundantly, O, pray that others may come, bring your children to Christ. I was pleased one day after I had been preaching on *Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness*, I think it was in New-England, I was taken up into a room to repose myself, there was a mantle-piece, representing the children brought in the arms of their parents to look at the brazen serpent: O may God help you to bring your children and your relations to view Christ. O Lord help my mother, my father, my child, my servant, to come to Jesus Christ that they may have life. The Lord help you to come, come young people. O I was charmed this morning, and every morning I give the sacrament, to see so many young men there crouding to the table; may the Spirit of God keep you near to Jesus Christ; and you young women, may God draw you nearer unto Christ. I remember when God touched my heart, and sent me down to see my friends in the country, I prayed God to bless me to those to whom I was called to dance and to play at cards with, and, blessed be God, he

blessed

bleſſed me to them all before I was twenty years of age, and after that he ſent me to a priſon, I there preached to a murderer, and ſome others, and, bleſſed be God, they came to Jeſus Chriſt, and one of them went off moſt triumphantly. A poor creature, fourſcore years of age, who has made it a practice to go and read to poor people, and to the priſoners, ſaid, "Sir, I began late, but, by the help of God, I now work the harder for Jeſus Chriſt." May he incline you to come, O young women and young men. There was a good woman who died ſometime ago, whoſe laſt word I think was, I now go to my God. Will you come and go too, you old grey-headed ſinners, that have one foot in the grave, God help you to go, God remove every obſtacle; God grant that every mountain may be brought low, and a highway made into your hearts for Jeſus Chriſt. Don't be angry with me; in a week or two I ſhall be toſſing on the ocean, while you are hearing God's word here; while I am amidſt ſtorms and tempeſts, you will be upon the earth. Paul could ſtand the whipping, but it is not a whipping, but weeping, that breaks my heart; my greateſt trial is, what if this ſermon ſhould help to ſink theſe people deeper

deeper in the pit, that makes my blood run cold. O that my ſermon may never riſe in judgment againſt you, my poor dear ſouls. I believe you find it hard when any of you are forced to be witneſſes againſt your own children, your own friends, and whoever deals with the word with a diſintereſted ſpirit, muſt do it; the only way to prevent it, is to come to Chriſt; and if you cannot come, if you are ſenſible of it, God be praiſed; he will come to you if you cannot come to Chriſt, he will come and make you willing in the day of his power; that this may be the happy caſe, God grant to us all, for his name's ſake. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON XV.

All Mens Place.

ECCLESIASTES vi. ver. 6.

Do not all go to one place?

I Remember an ingenious writer, who had been very copious in his publications, obſerved, that the beſt and moſt profitable were written after he was fifty years of age: it is ſuppoſed, then the judgment is ripened, and the genius is as it were advanced to maturity and knowledge; and experiences gathered when young, will be more uſeful in the decline of life, when grey hairs are ſeen here and there upon them. It is ſaid indeed, that old men are twice children; but there are ſome whoſe geniuſſes are ſo very low that they cannot be twice children, becauſe they are no better than children from their cradle to their grave; but this is not the caſe with God's

children, for upon a reflection of the wrong steps they have taken, if it proceeds from the sanctified sense of afflictions, they serve to make them more instructive in their latter day. This was the case of Solomon, though highly favoured when young, for the Lord appeared unto him twice, yet he fell most awfully, and had we not read of his recovery again, the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, must seem to fall to the ground, but we have reason to think that he was restored, and gave evidence of his recovery by writing in such a manner, that none could but one that knew much of God and himself; witness the book of Ecclesiastes, which in all ages of the church has been received with a peculiar respect. Ecclesiastes signifies a preacher, such Solomon was from his own experience, and exceeded by none but him *who spake as no man ever did.*

The chapter in which is the text, describes the vanity and misery of our present state, if unsanctified. *There is an evil*, saith he, *that I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men:* though he is going about to describe a monster, yet it is a monster that walks and stalks abroad, a man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth

wanteth nothing for his ſoul of all that he deſireth, though God gives him not power to eat, this is vanity and a great diſeaſe. Was there ever a more ſtriking deſcription of an old covetous miſer, who leaves his wealth to ſome perſon that ſpends it faſter than the poor wretch got it? He goes on and ſays, *If a man beget an hundred children, and live many years, ſo that the days of his years be many, and his ſoul be not filled with good, and alſo that he have no burial, I ſay, that an untimely birth is better than he, for he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkneſs, and his name ſhall be covered with darkneſs. Moreover, he hath not ſeen the ſun, nor known any thing; this hath more reſt than the other.* And then though this creature ſhould be ſuppoſed to live a thouſand years twice told, why, ſaith he, yet hath he ſeen no good, he has never been poſſeſſed of real good to make him happy here or hereafter, for, adds he, do not all go, both the abortive and the aged, young and old, high and low, rich and poor, whether bleſſed with children, or have no children, whether like Lazarus, that beg their bread, or Dives, cloathed in purple and fine linen, and fare ſumptuouſly every day, *Do not all go to one place?*

An important queſtion! ſhall I propoſe it to you to-night? do you know what the wiſe man means when he offers this queſtion to your conſideration, *Do not all go to one place?* what can be the deſign of this? the thing, no doubt, here ſpoken of is death, the place here ſpoken of, no doubt, is the grave. An amazing conſideration! part of the firſt ſentence that the great and holy God ever denounced againſt fallen man, to one and all, *Duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return.* On account of our firſt parent's tranſgreſſion, it is appointed unto all men, all ſorts of men, all the inhabitants under heaven, once to die; and therefore the apoſtle ſaith, *Death hath paſſed upon all men, even upon thoſe who have not ſinned after the ſimilitude of the tranſgreſſion of Adam*, that is, who have not been guilty of actual ſin. Can there be a ſtronger proof of the imputation of Adam's guilt, of original ſin, or a more cutting trial that a tender father and nurſing mother can undergo, than to ſee a dear little child juſt born, or but lent to the loving parents for a few months, taken away often in the greateſt agonies that we can conceive? and if God, my dear hearers, has ever ſuffered your dear children ſuddenly

denly to be ſeized with convulſions, and continue in anguiſh and agonizing pains for many days together, you have had ſufficient proof of it. A friend of mine in London, about thirty-two years ago, that was dotingly fond of every child he had, to whom I wrote a letter from Georgia, beginning with theſe words, Is your idol dead yet? for I thought it was ſuch an idol that would ſoon go. The account he gave me the firſt time I ſaw him was, that the day before my letter was received, the child died in ſuch agony and torture, that its excrements came out of its mouth, which made the fond and too indulgent parent wiſh to have rather died a thouſand deaths himſelf, than that his child ſhould die in ſuch a way; and added, I was obliged to go to God, and deſire him to take my darling away. What an awful proof are their ſufferings, that children come into the world with a corruption that renders them liable to God's wrath and damnation, but the blood, the precious blood of Jeſus Chriſt, it is to be hoped, cleanſes them from the guilt and filth of ſin. So any of you that have got children dead in infancy, O may you improve what I ſhall ſay by and by from the text, and pray and endeavour to go to that

place,

place, where I hope you will ſee your children making a bleſſed conſtellation in the firmament of heaven: in this reſpect all go to the ſame place, ſome at the beginning of life, ſome at the middle, and ſome at the decline; and happy, happy they who go to bed ſooneſt, if their ſouls are ſaved!

But, my dear hearers, in another caſe we may venture to contradict even Solomon; for if we conſider the words of our text in another view, all do not go to one place; it is true, all are buried in the grave either of earth or water, but then after death comes judgment; death gives the deciſive, the ſeparating blow. Suppoſe then in our enlarging on the text, we ſhould confine the word all to the unregenerate, and to thoſe who are not born of God, theſe indeed, die when they will, all go to one place. If you ſhould aſk me, for I love dearly to have an inquiſitive auditory, who I mean by unregenerate? who I mean by thoſe that are not born of God? I anſwer, I do not mean all that only bear the name of Jeſus Chriſt; I mention this, becauſe a great many people think that all that are baptized, either when they are adult or when they are young, whether ſprinkled or put under water, I believe

lieve a great many people think that all theſe go to heaven. I remember when I began to ſpeak againſt baptiſmal regeneration in my firſt ſermon, printed when I was about twenty-two years old, or a little more; the firſt quarrel many had with me was, becauſe I did not ſay that all people who were baptized were born again; I would as ſoon believe the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation. Can I believe that a perſon who gives no evidence of being a ſaint, from the time of his baptiſm to the time perhaps of his death, that never fights againſt the world, the fleſh, and the devil, and never minds one word of what his god-fathers and god-mothers promiſed for him, can I believe that perſon is a real Chriſtian? no, I can as ſoon believe, that a little wafer in the prieſt's hand, about a quarter of an inch long, is the very blood and bones of Jeſus Chriſt, who was hung upon the croſs without the gates of Jeruſalem. I do believe baptiſm to be an ordinance of Chriſt, but at the ſame time, no candid perſon can be angry for my aſſerting, that there are numbers that have been baptized when grown up, or when very young, that are not regenerated by God's Spirit, who will all go to one place, and that place is where

there

there will be no water to quench that dreadful fire that will parch them with thirſt. I am ſpeaking out of a book which contains the lively oracles of God, and in the name of one who is truth itſelf, who knowing very well what he ſpoke, is pleaſed in the moſt ſolemn and awful manner to ſay, and that to a maſter in Iſrael, that *if a man be not born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God*; he can have no idea, no proper, no adequate notion of it, much leſs is he to expect to be happy eternally with God hereafter; and therefore as our Lord ſpoke to this man, give me leave to obſerve to you. I don't mean the Deiſts only by unregenerate ſinners; I don't mean the profane mocker, who is advanced to the ſcorner's chair, nor your open profligate, adulterers, fornicators, abuſers of themſelves with mankind, theſe have damnation as it were written upon their foreheads with a ſun-beam; and they may know that God is not mocked, for if they die without repenting of theſe things, they ſhow they are in an unregenerate ſtate, and will all go to one place: if any of you are going thither, may God ſtop you this night. But, my brethren, I will come cloſer; there are more unbelievers within

within the pale than without the pale of the church; let me repeat it again, you may think of it when I am toſſing upon the mighty waters, there are more unbelievers within the pale of the church than without: all are not poſſeſſors that are profeſſors, all have not got the thing promiſed, all are not partakers of the promiſe, that talk and bleſs God they have got the promiſed Saviour; I may have him in my mouth and upon my tongue, without having the thing promiſed, or the bleſſed promiſe in my heart. A moral man that can walk touching the law blameleſs, a perſon that thinks he is righteous, becauſe he does not know why a perſon who has got no other religion but to go to a particular place of worſhip, values himſelf upon being a churchman or a diſſenter; he is ſuch a bigot, that he thinks no man will go to heaven but himſelf; theſe, however they may think themſelves ſafe, will e'er long go to one place, whether they think ſo or no; they will be ſoon ſummoned to one bar, and the voice of the archangel ſounding, *Ariſe, ye dead, and come to judgment*, will be the great alarm; the dead ſhall ariſe and appear before the Son of God, as Judge of all mankind; theſe, as well as the infidels, would gladly be

excuſed; and as they once ſaid, I pray to have me excuſed from coming to Chriſt, ſo they will fain be excuſed from appearing before, and being condemned by him, but they muſt all go to one place: and as they know not God, and are unacquainted with the divine life, they muſt hear and ſuffer the dreadful ſentence, *Depart, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* This is a thought, that if our hearts, my dear hearers, were properly awakened, would make our blood run cold: to be in a place of abſence from God, a place where damned ſouls will be for ever curſing God and one another: give me leave to dwell upon it a little, and may it be bleſſed, under God, to awaken ſome careleſs perſon, who, perhaps, may be taking a walk to-night, and juſt ſtep in to hear what the babler has to ſay while he is about to take his leave of the people. When I ſaw you from my ſtudy crowding to come in, when I ſaw you puſhing forward, ſome to go up to the Tabernacle, or into the veſtry, ſome to fill the area, and others to ſtand at the door, I thought how ſhall I manage with myſelf to-night, ſhall I endeavour to make theſe weep and cry, ſhall I not earneſtly addreſs ſo many precious

precious ſouls in a practical way, to bring them not to the preacher, but the preacher's maſter; knowing the terrors of the Lord, we would fain perſuade all to flee from this wrath to come. O awful thought! and yet it is a certain truth, all on earth muſt go to one place; if we live like, and are devils here, we muſt go to and be with them when we die for ever! A bleſſed miniſter of Chriſt, in Scotland, told me a ſtory he knew for truth, of a dreadful anſwer a poor creature gave on her death-bed, for the Scotch, except the people of New-England, are the moſt knowing people in religious matters, perhaps any where; this perſon when dying was aſked by a miniſter, where do you hope to go when you die? ſays ſhe, I don't care where I go; what, ſays he, don't you care whether you go to heaven or hell? no, ſays ſhe, I don't care whither I go; but, ſays he, if you was put to your choice where would you go? ſays ſhe, to hell; to that he replied, are you mad, will you go to hell? yes, ſays ſhe, I will; why ſo? ſays he; why, ſays ſhe, all my relations are there. The dear miniſter of Chriſt preached after her death, told the ſtory, and aſked, is it not ſhocking to hear a woman ſay ſhe would go

to hell becauſe her relations were there: why, you that are unregenerate muſt go to hell for all your unregenerate relations are there; your father the devil is there, all damned angels and damned ſpirits; your brothers and ſiſters are there; as they went one way here, ſo they muſt be baniſhed from Jeſus Chriſt to one place hereafter.

But I muſt cloſe this mournful theme, it is too gloomy to dwell upon; bleſſed be God, I have another place to tell you of, and another ſort of people to ſpeak of, who ſhall all, as well as thoſe I have ſpoken of, go to one place; perhaps, here are ſome of them; bleſſed is it to live in God. When death cloſes the eyes an actual ſeparation is made, and inſtead of hearing, *Depart, ye curſed*, they will hear, *Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Our bleſſed maſter, and who ſpeaks like him, gives us an awful view of Dives and Lazarus, the one feaſting and fattening his body to the grave, not keeping one faſt-day in a year, and the other ſtarving at his gate, perhaps buried in the ditch, denied a grave by the pariſh, while this vile wretch, who died alſo, had a pompous funeral; there he was carried

carried to one place; he was, perhaps, laid in ſtate, two mutes attending round the coffin, while damned devils were gnawing his ſoul; he lift up his eyes in torment. Hark! don't you hear him, I will ſtop a little that you may: you ungodly ones, do not you hear your brother cry? he would not pray while alive, but hell makes him pray, not to God but to Abraham; *Father Abraham*, ſays he, *ſend Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue*; and I verily believe, the damned will have a ſight of thoſe that are in heaven, to let them know what a heaven, what a Chriſt, what a glory they have loſt: God grant this may be none of your caſe, it will not be if you are of the number of thoſe who are born from above, that are made new creatures in Chriſt Jeſus; for by being born again from above, I mean receiving a principle of new life, imparted to our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt, changing you, giving you new thoughts, new words, new actions, new views, ſo that old things paſs away, and all things become new in our ſouls. I know very well, that the doctrine of a divine influence is exploded: I have often told you, and I tell you again, now I am about going to another clime

for

for a-while, that the grand quarrel that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt has with England, and I do not ſpeak it as a prophet, or the ſon of a prophet, but as the Lord God liveth, in whoſe name I ſpeak, for whoſe glory I am going abroad, and in whoſe fear I deſire to die, if the Spirit of God and his divine influence is not more regarded in this land than it has been, wo, wo, wo to thoſe that deſpiſe it, they may by and by, one day or other, wonder and periſh. Bleſſed be God, there are a happy few who do regard it; and I am perſuaded in my very ſoul, that the number in England, in Scotland, in Ireland, in Wales, and in America, does, and I pray it may, ſtill greatly increaſe. Yet, notwithſtanding the word of God does run and is glorified, how many are there at this day, that wilfully do deſpite to the Spirit of God, that hate the doctrine of the Spirit's divine influences; that if it were in their power, but we live under revolution principles, and are bleſſed with toleration, which is the bulwark of liberty of conſcience, otherwiſe the ſtreet would run with the blood of both churchmen and diſſenters, but whether the world will hear or forbear, bleſſed be God, when we ſpeak of the new

new birth, we do not ſpeak of a cunningly deviſed fable; what our eyes have ſeen, what our hands have handled, and what our hearts have felt of the word of life, that declare we unto you. When I was ſixteen years of age I began to faſt twice a week for thirty-ſix hours together, prayed many times a-day, received the ſacrament every Lord's-day, faſting myſelf almoſt to death all the forty days of Lent, during which, I made it a point of duty never to go leſs than three times a-day to public worſhip, beſides ſeven times a-day to my private prayers, yet I knew no more that I was to be born again in God, born a new creature in Chriſt Jeſus, than if I was never born at all. I had a mind to be upon the ſtage, but then I had a qualm of conſcience; I uſed to aſk people, pray can I be a player, and yet go to the ſacrament and be a Chriſtian? O, ſay they, ſuch a one, who is a player, goes to the ſacrament; though, according to the law of the land, no player ſhould receive the ſacrament, unleſs they give proof that they repent; that was archbiſhop Tillotſon's doctrine: well then, if that be the caſe, ſaid I, I will be a player, and I thought to act my part for the devil as well as any body;

body; but, bleſſed be God, he ſtopped me in my journey. I muſt bear teſtimony to my old friend, Mr. Charles Weſley, he put a book into my hands, called, the Life of God in the Soul of Man, whereby God ſhewed me, that I muſt be born again or be damned. I know the place; it may be ſuperſtitious, perhaps, but whenever I go to Oxford, I cannot help running to that place where Jeſus Chriſt firſt revealed himſelf to me, and gave me the new birth. As a good writer ſays, a man may go to church, ſay his prayers, receive the ſacrament, and yet, my brethren, not be a Chriſtian. How did my heart riſe, how did my heart ſhudder, like a poor man that is afraid to look into his account-books, leſt he ſhould find himſelf a bankrupt; yet ſhall I burn that book, ſhall I throw it down, ſhall I put it by, or ſhall I ſearch into it? I did, and holding the book in my hand, thus addreſſed the God of heaven and earth: Lord, if I am not a Chriſtian, if I am not a real one, God, for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, ſhow me what Chriſtianity is, that I may not be damned at laſt. I read a little further, and the cheat was diſcovered; O, ſays the author, they that know any thing of religion, know it is a vital union

union with the Son of God, Chriſt formed in the heart; O what a ray of divine life did then break in upon my poor ſoul, I fell a writing to all my brethren, to my ſiſters, talked to the ſtudents as they came in my room, put off all trifling converſation, put all trifling books away, and was determined to ſtudy to be a ſaint, and then to be a ſcholar; and from that moment God has been carrying on his bleſſed work in my ſoul; and as I am now fifty-five years of age, going towards ſixty, I tell you, my brethren, as I ſhall leave you in a few days, I am more and more convinced that this is the truth of God, and without it you never can be ſaved by Jeſus Chriſt: all thoſe born of God, whether when young or old, at the ſixth, ninth, or eleventh hour, however ſeparated from one another, through the grace of God, they ſhall all go to one place.

If you aſk where that place is? I anſwer, bleſſed be God, to heaven; if you aſk to whom they ſhall go? I anſwer, to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect; and, what will be beſt of all, to Jeſus Chriſt, the heavenly inheritance. If we were not to go to him, what would heaven be? if we were not to ſee him,

what would glory be? I know ſome people think heaven is a fine place, ſo it is; but what makes it ſo, but the preſence and joy of the God of glory? I would rather die a thouſand deaths, than ſacrifice my affections as I have done: after I had taken leave of all my friends ſome years ago at Deptford, I burſt out into tears and ſaid, Lord, I would not ſuffer all I feel for my friends but for thee, then returned to my friends and ſaid, Now the bitterneſs of death is paſſed, I am going to be executed, God's will be done. Bleſſed be God, after death there are no ſeparations, we ſhall all go to one place; miniſters that could not preach in one pulpit, and Chriſtians that could not agree with one another, bleſſed be God, ſhall by and by go to one heaven; whether they go to one place or no in this world, does not ſignify: ſays one, I go to the Diſſenters; another, I go to church; and a great many Chriſtians judge of one another as infidels, becauſe they are not of one ſentiment. A good woman came to me ſome years ago juſt as I had done preaching, ſome people love to be impertinent, what do you think, ſays ſhe, of Cotton Mather and another miniſter, one ſaid, I ought to receive the ſacrament before my expe-

experience was given in, the other ſaid not, and I believe the angels were glad to carry them both to heaven. I ſaid, good woman, I believe they have not talked about it ſince, for they will no more talk about theſe things. We have but one Father, one Holy Ghoſt, we have lived in one communion of faith; bleſſed be the living God, e'er long the angels ſhall come and call the elect from the eaſt, the weſt, the north, and the ſouth, to be at home with the Lord.

If this be the caſe, my brethren, it may ſupport us under all the changes and partings of this mortal ſtate. As I have been in a public character, I ſuppoſe I may venture to ſay, that no one has been called to ſuch frequent partings from God's people as I have: I am going now the thirteenth time over the water; yes, I find what is ſaid of St. Paul is true, he could bear a whipping, not a weeping: what mean you, ſays he, to weep and break my heart; he never ſaid, whip me and break my back, no, no. All get to one place: what a bleſſed ſtate! to ſee one's ſpiritual father, to ſee one's ſpiritual children, and hear them ſay, ſuch and ſuch a time God begat me to himſelf by your miniſtry! what a bleſſing will it

be to hear them ſay, bleſſed be God, next to the Spirit I owe my coming here to that ſervant of thine! and with what raviſhment will the miniſter ſay, behold me and the children thou haſt given me! with what holy triumph will they all then caſt their crowns at the foot of the Lamb! with what joy will they cry, grace, grace, when the top-ſtone is brought forth, and how will they then try who ſhall praiſe redeeming love and rich free grace in the higheſt ſtrain! The difference here is you know, that we ſing in parts, ſome ſing treble, ſome tenor, and ſome baſe; what then? each part helps the other, were all to ſing alike the harmony would not be compleat; however ſhocking it is in this world, all the differences that have been among the people of God, will only make us ſing and unite us the better in a future ſtate.

Well, my dear hearers, by this time then I hope you have began to aſk, to what place am I going? Suppoſe now you reaſon thus; I have heard to-night that all unregenerate perſons go to hell, and dwell among the damned; I have heard that all that are born again of God, and all that believe in Jeſus Chriſt, whether Jew or Gentile, whether bond

bond or free, all go to dwell with God, with angels, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect; I have heard the miniſter ſay, though he ſeems ſometimes to ramble in his diſcourſe, that we all go to one place, that is, the grave: I am haſtening there, autumn is coming on, the fall of the leaf is approaching, a blaſt, occaſioned by the ſudden change of weather, or a ſurfeit, by feaſting too luxuriantly on the fruits of God's bounty; another illneſs may take me to my long home. I hear of ſuch-a-one's dying, and of ſuch-a-one, perhaps in an apoplectic, perhaps in a paralytic fit: I am luſty and ſtrong, I am glorying in my ſtrength, but who knows but that may be only making me food for a fever; one would ſtand it better that was more emaciated than I am. If I ſhould be taken this night, am I going the way to hell, or the way to heaven. Adrian, the emperor, cried out upon a time, *My trembling, dear departing ſoul, whither art thou going?* theſe were his words. Won't you hear an emperor preach, preach on his dying bed, when the ſilver cords of life are looſed? Conſcience, conſcience, conſcience, thou candle of the Lord, may he help thee to light a poor ſinner into a knowledge of himſelf. I

charge

charge thee in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the name of that Saviour, in whose name and by whose power, I trust, I now preach; O conscience! thou faithful monitor, let every one hear their own. Come, if conscience was to speak what would it say? why, that if you are not acquainted with yourself and Christ, you are lost for ever. The Americans are the most hospitable people under heaven, they love to entertain strangers, who may be hereby kindly provided for without going to an inn: I always endeavoured to drop a word for Christ when I came to their houses. I remember Mr. Seeward, and some other good friends were with me; when I first got into the house, I began to talk of Christ; the master of it said, Sir, I believe you are right; I can't open a leaf in my bible, but I find I am no Christian: would to God all here minded the same leaf! May be, many here say, sir, I scorn your words; well, don't I? don't God tell you that won't do? you are a moral man, but don't love God; you don't get drunk, because it will make your head ach; you don't commit fornication and adultery, which is common among the great, and therefore they think God will not punish them

for

for it; perhaps you are not a fornicator, leſt you ſhould ſtand in a ſheet, though we have no diſcipline among us now; you don't do theſe things for fear of maintaining the baſtard, or being taken up; but does your obedience proceed from love to God, to Chriſt; if not, may God convince you of your miſerable ſtate before you go hence.

But, bleſſed be God, there are numbers of dear ſouls here, that I hope e'er long to live in one place and to eternal ages with. All hail, my fellow Chriſtians; all hail, my dear brethren and friends; all hail, ye that are children of one parent, born of one Spirit, and bring forth the fruits of the Holy Ghoſt in your converſation; yet a little while, and we muſt part; whether I die, or you die, bleſſed be God, one place ſhall e'er long hold us; in yonder bleſſed world we ſhall e'er long meet, and praiſe free grace; my brethren, we ſhall be then for ever with the Lord, for ever one with Chriſt; and if this be the caſe, let us comfort one another with theſe things; and if we are all going to one place, God, of his infinite mercy, keep us from falling out by the way. Don't ſay, I am of the Foundery; don't ſay, I am of the Tabernacle; don't

ſpend

ſpend your time in talking againſt John Weſley and George Whitefield; don't ſay, you go to the Tabernacle, I'll go to the chapel; no, don't ſpeak of Paul and Cephas; God unite us more and more to Jeſus Chriſt; and if you are going to heaven, God help you to travel a little faſter than we do. My brethren, let us preſs forward toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Chriſt Jeſus. O that the God of love may fill us with ſuch peace and ſuch joy, that every ſtorm, every trial, every temptation we meet with, may be over-ruled to good for us; all our afflictions, all our temptations, are to make heaven more deſirable, and earth more loathſome.

If this is not the caſe with ſome of you, God convert you to-night. Help me, my dear Tabernacle and London hearers, help me, help me, help me for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake. You was once going to hell yourſelves, for God's ſake endeavour to ſtop thoſe that are going there: pray for your unconverted friends. Young people, young people, that are going to hell giddily, may God ſtop you this night: was I to talk to you ſeriouſly, you would ſay as a young gentleman did, when I deſired he would not ſwear; he turned to me and ſaid, Doctor,

Doctor, (I was no more a doctor then than now, and but young too) it is very hard you will not let a man go to hell his own way; if any of you are of this ſtamp, God grant he may not let you go to hell your own way, but go to heaven in God's way, in Chriſt's way. I am ſure you are not happy; the devil never had a happy child in the world: O that God may turn your feet into the way of peace to-night: O that it may be with you as with a young man one night formerly: I remember I had about two hundred notes then; I came into moorfields this morning at ſix o'clock, ſays he, to meet my ſweetheart, but, bleſſed be God, I met with Jeſus Chriſt, my ſweetheart: would to God you may do ſo, young men, to-night: when you have gone on to that place, O that it may be with you as it was with good Mr. Crane, who is appointed ſteward of the Orphan-houſe; he went once to ſee a play at Drury-lane, but that being full he went to Covent-garden, and that was ſo full he could not put his head in; well, ſays he, he told it me himſelf, and he is an Iſraelite indeed, one of the moſt honeſt men, perhaps, in the world, I will go and hear doctor Whitefield; there God reached his

heart, and now he ſhines. I had letters yeſterday or the day before from Georgia, that made my heart leap for joy; honeſt Mr. Wright, that ingenious, indefatigable man, and Mr. Crane, have gone on ſo well, and have managed the Orphan-houſe ſo well, that all letters from all parts give me a pleaſure: would to God, one ſays, you could ſend ten thouſand ſuch people as Mr. Wright and Mr. Crane; would to God you could ſend a thouſand ſuch over, and an hundred preachers to preach Chriſt among us. O that curioſity may be over-ruled for good to ſome of you to-night: but I forgot myſelf, and can you blame me if I ſhould detain you a little, tho' I am really afraid of unfitting myſelf for my voyage, if I tire myſelf before I go: to-morrow I am to go to ſee where I am to ſleep. I intend, God willing, to have a ſacrament here to-morrow, and another next Sabbath-day morning. I intend, God willing, to give you a parting word on Sunday evening, and give you notice of taking my laſt farewel in the week, for I muſt get a day or two to diſpatch my private buſineſs, and be ready to go where my God calleth me.

I ſhall,

I ſhall, I think, be called to do ſomething which I would, if poſſible, have avoided, and that is, as this place has been repaired, you ſee 'tis freſh done, which is expenſive, and I am willing to leave every thing clear before I go, a collection muſt be made for defraying the charge. The world thinks I am very rich; a man, the other day, was ſo perſuaded of my riches, that he ſent me word, if I did not lay thirty pounds in ſuch a place, I ſhould be killed as ſure as I am alive; but, bleſſed be God, I am alive yet; I do not fear dying ſuddenly, or being diſpatched by a poignard, or a piſtol to make a paſſage for my ſoul to flee to God. You may think, perhaps, I get a great deal by preaching here; and now I am going away, what do you think my ſtated allowance is for preaching at the Tabernacle? I have no more from this place than one hundred pounds a year; and I aſked but laſt night how it ſtood, and inſtead of having a ſingle ſixpence, I was told there were fifty pounds arrears; well, ſaid I, ungrateful as it is to me, I will make a collection to-night that all may be left free; and if others are left to make an advantage of it, may God make it a bleſſing. There are not ſix people in this place that I

have had the value of a guinea of from January to Auguſt ; nor have I had a guinea from all theſe ordinances towards bearing the expences of my voyage. When I come, my brethren, to heaven, you ſhall then know with what a ſpirit I have ſerved you; you ſhall then know that all I have done is to build places for others, where I hope God will meet you and your children when I am dead and gone. O that we may meet in one place, when God calls me hence: the Lord quicken you, the Lord ſtrengthen you, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you, and grant that e'er long we may be where there ſhall be no more ſorrow, but we ſhall dwell with God and one another for ever; even ſo, Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON XVI.

God a Believer's Glory.

ISAIAH lx. ver. 19.

And thy God thy Glory.

I LATELY had occaſion to ſpeak on the verſe immediately following that of our text; but when I am reading God's word, I often find it is like being in a tempting garden, when we pluck a little fruit and find it good, we are apt to look after and pluck a little more, only with this difference, the fruit we gather below often hurts the body at the ſame time that it pleaſes the appetite, but when we walk in God's garden, when we gather fruit of the Redeemer's plants, the more we eat the more we are delighted, and the freer we are the more welcome; if any chapter in the bible deſerves this character and deſcription of an evangelical Eden, this does.

It

It is very remarkable, and I have often told you of it, that all the apoſtles preach firſt the law, and then the goſpel, which finds man in a ſtate of death, points out to him how he is to get life, and then ſweetly conducts him to it. Great and glorious things are ſpoken of the church of God in this chapter; and it ſtruck me very much this evening ever ſince I came into the pulpit, that the great God ſpeaks of the church in the ſingular number: how can that be, when the church is compoſed of ſo many millions gathered out of all nations, languages, and tongues? how is it, that God ſays thy maker and not your maker, that he ſpeaks of the church as though it conſiſted only of one individual perſon? the reaſon of it is this, and is very obvious, that though the church is compoſed of many members, they have but one Head, and they are united by the bond of one Spirit, by whom they have the ſame vital union of the ſoul with God; and therefore it teaches Chriſtians not to ſay to one another, *I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, or Cephas*, but to behave and live ſo, that the world may know that we all belong to one common Chriſt: God revive, continue, and increaſe this true Chriſtian love among us!

Of

Of this church, thus collectively conſidered, united under one head, the bleſſed evangelical prophet thus ſpeaks, *Violence ſhall no more be heard in thy land, waſting nor deſtruction within thy borders, but thou ſhalt call thy walls ſalvation, and thy gates,* where the magiſtrates aſſemble, and the people go in and out, *praiſe.* From this text, a great many good and great men have gathered what they call the Millenium, that Jeſus Chriſt is to come and reign a thouſand years on earth, but I muſt acknowledge that I have always rejected a great many good mens poſitive opinion about the ſeaſon when this ſtate commences, and I would warn you all againſt fixing any time; for what ſignifies whether Chriſt comes to reign a thouſand years, or when he comes, ſince you and I are to die very ſoon; and therefore inſtead of puzzling our heads about it, God grant we may live ſo that we may reign with him for ever; and it ſeems to me, that whatſoever is ſaid of this ſtate on earth, that the millenium is to be underſtood in a ſpiritual ſenſe, as an emblem of a glorious, eternal, beatific ſtate in the kingdom of heaven. *The ſun ſhall no more be thy light by day, nor for brightneſs ſhall the moon give light unto thee,*

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but the Lord ſhall be unto thee an everlaſting light; and in order to prepare us for that light, and ſhow us the nature of it, while we ſpeak of it may it come with light and power to our ſouls. He adds in our text, *and thy God ſhall be thy glory:* this is ſpoken to all believers in general, but it is ſpoken to all fearful believers in particular; and I don't know that I can poſſibly cloſe my poor, feeble miniſtration among you here, better than with theſe words; though, God willing, I intend, if he ſhall ſtrengthen me this week, to give you a parting word next Wedneſday morning; and O that what has been my comfort this day in the meditation on this paſſage, may be yours and mine to all eternity. He that hath an ear to hear let him hear what the evangelic prophet ſaith, *thy God thy glory.*

The Holy Ghoſt ſeems, as it were, particularly fond of this expreſſion; when God publiſhed the ten commandments upon mount Sinai, he prefaced it thus, *I am the Lord*, and not content with that, he adds, *thy God*; and the frequency of it, I ſuppoſe, made Luther ſay, that *the goſpel deals much in pronouns, in which conſiſts a believer's comfort*; but if there were no other argument than this,

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it would cut up that deſtructive principle by the very root that pretends to tell us that there is no ſuch thing as appropriation in the Bible; that our faith is only to be a rational aſſent to the word of God, without a particular application of that word made to our ſouls: this is as contrary to the goſpel, and to experience of every real ſaint, as light is contrary to darkneſs and heaven to hell. My brethren, I appeal to any of you, what good would it do you, if you had ten thouſand notes wrote in large characters by the fineſt hand that can write in London; ſuppoſe you have got them, as many men have, and it is a very convenient way, that they were put into your little pockets made on the inſide of your coat; ſuppoſe you ſhould ſay, my coat is buttoned, I have all theſe here next my heart: when I come to look at them, I find there is not one note payable to me, they are all either forged, or payable to ſome body elſe, and therefore are good for nothing to me. All the promiſes of the goſpel, all that is ſaid of God and Chriſt, can do us no good, except that God and Chriſt is ours. The great queſtion therefore is, whether the God we profeſs to believe in, is our God? not only, whether he is ſo in general, that the devils may ſay; but

whether he is our God in particular. The devils can ſay, O God; but the devils cannot ſay, my God: that is a privilege peculiar to God's choſen people, who really believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: and therefore, my brethren, a deiſt cannot ſay, my God, my Chriſt, becauſe he does not believe on that medium by which God becomes our God. That was a noble ſaying of Luther, "I will have nothing to do with an abſolute God;" that is, I will have nothing to do with a God out of Chriſt. Now this is a deiſt's glory: Lord Bolingbroke values himſelf upon it, I am aſtoniſhed at that man's infidelity and cowardice. I don't like thoſe men that leave their writings to be publiſhed after their death: I love to ſee men bold in their writings: I like an honeſt man that will put out his writings while alive, that he may ſee what men can ſay againſt him, and then anſwer them; but it is meer cowardice to leave it to the world to anſwer for it, to ſet us a cavelling after they are got into the grave: ſays he, I will have nothing to do with the God of Moſes; and I ſuppoſe the principles of that deiſt made one pretty near to him aſk as ſoon as his breath was out of his body, where do you think he is gone to? another

other replies, where do you think but to hell. God grant that may not be the portion of any here!

The queſtion then is, how God is our God; *thy God.* My brethren, our all depends upon it; what ſignifies ſaying, this is mine, and that is mine, if you cannot ſay, God is mine. The beſt thing that God has left in the New Teſtament, is himſelf: *I will be their God*, that is one of the legacies; and *a new heart alſo will I give them*, that is another; *I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts*, that is another: but all that is good for nothing, comparatively ſpeaking, unleſs God has ſaid at the ſame time, for they are all inſeparable, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.* Now how ſhall I know that God is my God? I am afraid, ſome people think there is no knowing; well then, if you think ſo, you ſet up a worſhip, and go and erect an altar, and inſtead of receiving God in the ſacrament as yours, go and worſhip an unknown God. I am ſo far from believing, that we cannot know that God is ours, that I am fully perſuaded of it, and would ſpeak it with humility, and I would not chuſe to leave you with a lie in my mouth, that I have known

it for about thirty-five years as clear as the ſun is in the meridian, that God is my God. And how ſhall I know it, my brethren? I would aſk you this queſtion, didſt thou ever feel the want of God to be thy God? No body knows God to be their God that did not feel him to be his God in Chriſt: out of Chriſt, God is a conſuming fire. I know there are a great variety of ways in peoples converſions, but ſtill, my brethren, we muſt all feel our miſery, we muſt all feel our diſtance from God, all feel that we are eſtranged from God, that we bring into the world with us a nature that is not agreeable to the law of God, nor poſſibly can be; we cannot be ſaid to believe that God is our God, till we are brought to be reconciled to him through his Son. Can I ſay, a perſon is my friend, till I am reconciled to him? and therefore the goſpel only is the miniſtration of reconciliation. Paul ſaith, *We beſeech you as ambaſſadors of Chriſt, that you would be reconciled unto God:* this is to be the grand topic of our preaching; we are to beſeech them, and God himſelf turns beggar to his own creatures to be reconciled to him: now this reconciliation is brought about by a poor ſinner's being brought to Jeſus Chriſt; and

and when once he ſees his enmity and hatred to God, feeling the miſery of departing from him, and being conſcious that he is obnoxious to eternal wrath, flies to Jeſus as to a place of refuge, and expects only a reconciliation thro' the blood of the Lamb; without this, neither you nor I can ſay, God is my God: *there is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.* The miniſters of Chriſt muſt take care they don't preach an unknown God, and we muſt take care we don't pretend to live upon an unknown God, a God that is not appropriated and brought home to our ſouls by the efficacy of the Spirit. But, my brethren, we cannot ſay, God is our God, unleſs we are in Jeſus Chriſt. Can you ſay, ſuch a one is your father, unleſs you can give proof of it? You may be baſtards, there are many baſtards laid at Chriſt's door. Now, God cannot be my God, at leaſt I cannot know him to be ſo, unleſs he is pleaſed to ſend into my heart the ſpirit of adoption, and to admit me to enjoy familiarity with Chriſt.

My brethren, I told you the other night that the grand controverſy God has with England is for the ſlight put on the Holy Ghoſt. As ſoon as a perſon begins to talk of the work of the Holy Ghoſt, they cry, you are a methodiſt:

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as ſoon as you ſpeak about the divine influences of the Holy Ghoſt, O! ſay they, you are an enthuſiaſt. May the Lord keep theſe methodiſtical enthuſiaſts amongſt us to the lateſt poſterity. Ignatius, ſuppoſed to have been one of the children that Jeſus took up in his arms, in his firſt Epiſtle (pray read it) wrote ſoon after St. John's death, and we value nothing ſo authentic as what was wrote in the three firſt centuries, bears a noble teſtimony to this truth. When I was performing my firſt exerciſes at Oxford, I uſed to take delight to walk and read it, and could not help noting and putting down from time to time ſeveral remarkable paſſages. In the ſuperſcription of all his Epiſtles, I remember, he ſtiles himſelf *Theophoros*, i. e. Bearer of God *, and believed that thoſe he wrote to, were ſo too. Some body went and told Trajan, that one Ignatius was an enthuſiaſt, that he carried God about him: being brought before the emperor, who, though in other reſpects a good prince, was a cruel enemy to the Chriſtians: but many a good prince does bad things by the influence of wicked counſellors, like our king Henry the Vth, who was brought in to perſecute the poor Lollards,

* Deum ferens, *inſpired*, *divine*, *holy*.

Lollards, for aſſembling in St. Giles's fields to hear the pure goſpel, by falſe accuſation of being rebels againſt him. Before ſuch a prince was Ignatius brought; ſays Trajan, who is this that calls himſelf a *bearer of God?* ſays Ignatius, I am he, for which he quotes this paſſage, *I will dwell in them, and will walk in them, and they ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſays the Lord almighty.* The emperor was ſo enraged that, in order to cure him of his enthuſiaſm, he ordered him to be devoured by lions; at which Ignatius laughed for joy: O! ſays he, am I going to be devoured? and when his friends came about him, he almoſt danced for gladneſs; when they carried him to execution he ſmiled, and turning about, ſaid, now I begin to be a martyr of Jeſus Chriſt! I have heard that the lions have leaped from the martyrs, but when they come to me, I will encourage them to fall on me with all their violence. God give you ſuch enthuſiaſm in a trying hour! This is to have God for our God: *he that believeth hath the witneſs in himſelf*, as it is written in this bleſſed word of God, and I hope it will be the laſt book that I ſhall read. Farewel father, farewel mother, farewel ſun, moon, and ſtars! was the language of one

of

of the Scotch martyrs in king Charles's time, and it is amazing to me that even Mr. Hume (I believe) a profeſſed deiſt, in his Hiſtory of England mentions this as a grand exit, and alſo that ſeraphic ſoul Mr. Hervey, now with God, that the laſt words of the martyr were, Farewel thou precious Bible, thou bleſſed book of God. This is my rock, this is my foundation, it is now about thirty-five years ſince I have begun to read the Bible upon my pillow. I love to read this book, but the book is nothing but an account of the promiſes which it contains, and almoſt every word from the beginning to the end of it ſpeaks of a ſpiritual diſpenſation, and the Holy Ghoſt, that unites our ſouls to God, and helps a believer to ſay, my Lord and my God! If you content yourſelves with that, the devil will let you talk of doctrines enough: O you ſhall turn from Arminianiſm to Calviniſm; O you ſhall be orthodox enough, if you will be content to live without Chriſt's living in you. Now when you have got the Spirit, then you may ſay, God is mine. O this is very fine, ſay ſome, every body pretends to the Spirit: and then you may go on as a biſhop once told a nobleman, My Lord, theſe methodiſts, ſay they, do all by the Spirit,

ſo

ſo if the devil bids them murder any body, they will ſay, the Spirit bid them do it; and that very biſhop died, how? why horrid! the laſt words he ſpoke were theſe, *The battle is fought, the battle is fought, the battle is fought, but the victory is loſt for ever.* God grant, you and I may not die with ſuch words as theſe. I hope you and I ſhall die and ſay, *The battle is fought, the battle is fought, the battle is fought, I have fought the good fight, and the victory is gained for ever.* Thus died Mr. Ralph Erſkine, his laſt words were, Victory, victory, victory! and they that can call God their God, ſhall by and by cry, Victory, victory! and that for ever. God grant, we may all be of that happy number.

If we can call God our God, we ſhall endeavour by the Holy Ghoſt to be like God, we ſhall have his divine image ſtamped upon our ſouls, and endeavour to be followers of that God who is our Father: and this brings in the other part of the text, *thy God, thy Glory.* What is that? The greateſt honor that a poor believer thinks he can have on earth, is to boaſt that God is his God. When it was propoſed to David, that if he killed an hundred Philiſtines, he ſhould have the king's daughter for his

wife, and a very ſorry wife ſhe was, no great gain turned out to him: ſays he, *do you think it is a ſmall thing to be the ſon-in-law to a king?* a poor ſtrippling as I am here come with my ſhepherd's crook, what! to be married to a king's daughter, do you think that is a ſmall thing? and if David thought it no ſmall thing to be allied to a king by his daughter, what a great thing muſt it be to be allied to the Lord by one Spirit? I am afraid there are ſome people that were once poor that are now rich, that think it a great thing, that wiſh, O that my family had a coat of arms; ſome people would give a thouſand pounds, I believe, for one. Coats of arms are very proper to make diſtinction in life, a great many people wear coats of arms that their anceſtors got honourably, but they are a diſgrace to them as they wear them on their coaches. But this is our glory, whether we walk or ride, whatever our pedigree may be in life, this is our honor that our God may be our glory. *O what manner of love is this*, ſaith one, *that the Lord doth beſtow on us, that we ſhould be called the ſons of God!* born not of the will of man, born not of fleſh, but born from above. O God grant that this may be your glory and mine!

My

My brethren, if God is our God and our glory, I'll tell you what we ſhall prove it by: whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we ſhould do all to the glory of God. Religion, as I have often told you, turns our whole life into one continued ſacrifice of love to God. As a needle, when once touched by a loadſtone, turns to a particular pole, ſo the heart that is touched by the love of God, turns to his God again. I ſhall have occaſion to take notice of it by and by, when I am aboard a ſhip: for as ſoon as I get on board, I generally place myſelf in one particular place under the compaſs that hangs over my head, I often look at it by night and by day; when I riſe the needle turns to one point, when I go to bed I find it turns to the ſame point; and often, while I have been looking at it, my heart has been turned to God, ſaying, Lord Jeſus, as that needle touched by the loadſtone, turns to one point, O may my heart touched by the magnet of God's love, turn to him! A great many people think, they never worſhip God but when at church; and a great many are very demure on Lord's days, though many begin to leave that off. I know of no place upon the face of the earth where the Sabbath is kept

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as it is at Boſton: if a ſingle perſon was to walk in Boſton ſtreets in time of worſhip, he would be taken up; it is not truſted to poor inſignificant men, but the juſtices go out in time of worſhip, they walk with a white wand, and if they catch any perſon walking in the ſtreets, they put them under a black rod. O! the great miſchiefs the poor pious people have ſuffered lately thro' the town's being diſturbed by the ſoldiers! When the drums were beating before the houſe of Dr. Sawell, one of the holieſt men that ever was, when he was ſick and dying, on the ſabbath day, by his meeting, where the noiſe of a ſingle perſon was never heard before, and he begged that for Chriſt's ſake they would not beat the drum; they damned and ſaid, that they would beat to make him worſe: this is not acting for the glory of God; but when a ſoul is turned to God, every day is a ſabbath, every meal is a ſpiritual refreſhment, and every ſentence he ſpeaks, ſhould be a ſermon; and whether he ſtays abroad or at home, whether he is on the exchange, or locked up in a cloſet, he can ſay, O God, thou art my God!

Now, my dear friends, can you, dare you ſay, that your God is your glory, and do you aim

aim at glorifying the Lord your God: if your God is your glory, then say, *O God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I am crucified to the world.* What say you to that now? don't talk of God's being your glory, if you don't love his cross. If God is our glory, we shall glory not only in doing, but in suffering for him; we shall glory in tribulation, and count ourselves most highly honoured when we are called to suffer most for his great name sake. I might enlarge, but you may easily judge by my poor feeble voice this last week, that neither my strength of voice, or body, will permit me to be long to-night, and yet I will venture to give you your last parting salutation; and though I have been dissuaded from getting up to preach this night, yet I thought as my God was my glory, I should glory in preaching till I died. O that God may be all our glory! All our own glory fades away, there is nothing will be valuable at the great day but this, Thou art my God, and thou art my glory. It was a glorious turn that good Mr. Shepherd of Bradford mentions in one of his sermons, where he represents Jesus Christ as coming to judgment seated

upon

upon his throne, in a ſermon preached before ſome miniſters. Chriſt calls one miniſter to him, Pray what brought you into the church? O, ſays he, Lord, there was a living in the family, and I was preſented to it becauſe it was a family living: ſtand thou by, ſays Chriſt. A ſecond comes, What didſt thou enter into the church for? O Lord, ſays he, I had a fine elocution, I had pretty parts, and I went into the church to ſhew my oratory and my parts: ſtand thou by, thou haſt thy reward. A third was called, And what brought you into the church? Lord, ſays he, thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I am a poor creature, vile and miſerable, and unworthy, and helpleſs, but I appeal to thee my glory, thou ſitteſt upon the throne, that thy glory and the good of ſouls brought me there: Chriſt immediately ſays, Make room, men, make room, angels, and bring up that ſoul to ſit near me on my throne. Thus ſhall it be done to all that make God their glory here below. Glorify God on earth, and he will glorify you in heaven. *Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,* ſhall be your portion: and if ſo, Lord God almighty make us content to be vilified

vilified whilſt here, make us content to be deſpiſed while below, make us content to have evil things ſpoken of us, all for Chriſt's ſake, yet a little while, and Chriſt will roll away the ſtone: and the more we are honoured by his grace to ſuffer, the more we ſhall be honoured in the kingdom of heaven. O that thought! O that bleſſed thought! O that ſoul tranſporting thought! it is enough to make us leap into a fiery furnace; in this ſpirit, in this temper, may God put every one of us.

If there be any of you that have not yet called God your God, may God help you to do ſo to-night. When I was reaſoning within myſelf, whether I ſhould come up, or whether it was my duty or not? I could not help thinking, who knows but God will bleſs a poor feeble worm to-night. I remember, a dear friend ſent me word after I was gone to Georgia, "Your laſt ſermon at the Tabernacle "was bleſſed to a particular perſon;" I heard from that perſon to-day: and who knows but ſome may come to-day, and ſay, I will go and hear what the babler has to ſay? who knows but curioſity may be over-ruled for good? who knows but thoſe that have ſerved the luſt of the fleſh and the pride of life for their

their god, may now take the Lord to be their God? O! if I could but ſee this, I think I could drop down dead for you.

My dear Chriſtians, will you not help me to-night, you that can go and call God your God? go and beg of God for me, pray to heaven for me, do pray for thoſe that are in the gall of bitterneſs, that have no God, no Chriſt to go to, and if they were to die to-night, would be damned for ever. O poor ſinner, where is your glory then? where is your purple and fine linnen then? your purple robes will be turned into purple fire, and inſtead of calling God your God, will be damn'd with the devil: O think of your danger! *O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord!* If you never was awakened before, may the arrows of God, ſteep'd in the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, reach your hearts now! Think how you live at enmity with God, think of your danger every day and every hour, your danger of dropping into hell; think how your friends in glory will leave you, and may this conſideration, under the influences of the Holy Ghoſt, excite you to chuſe God for your God! Tho' the ſun is going down, tho' the ſhadow of the evening is coming on, God is willing, O man,

God

God is willing, O woman, to be a ſinner's God, he has found out a way whereby he can be reconciled to you. I remember, when I ſaw a nobleman condemned to be hanged, the Lord High Steward told him, that however he was obliged to paſs ſentence on him, and did not know that juſtice would be ſatisfied but by the execution of the law in this world, yet there might be a way whereby juſtice might be ſatisfied and mercy take place in another: when I heard his Lordſhip ſpeak, I wiſhed that he had not only ſaid, there might be a way, but that he had found out the way wherein God could be juſt, and yet a poor murderer coming to Jeſus Chriſt ſhould be pardoned.

You that can call God yours, God help you from this moment to glorify him more and more: and if God be your God and your glory, I am perſuaded, if the love of God abounds in your hearts, you will be willing on every occaſion to do every thing to promote his honor and glory, and therefore you will be willing at all times to aſſiſt and help as far as lies in your power to keep up places of worſhip, to promote his glory in the ſalvation and converſion of ſinners; and I mention this becauſe there is to be a collection this night; I would

have choſe, if poſſible, to have evaded this point, but as this Tabernacle has been repaired, and as the expence is pretty large, and as I would chuſe to leave every thing unincumbered, I told my friends, I would undertake to make a collection, that every thing might be left quite clear: remember, it is not for me, but for yourſelves, I told you on Wedneſday how matters were; I am now going a thirteenth time over the water on my own expence, and you ſhall know at the great day what little, very little aſſiſtance I have had from thoſe who owed, under God, their ſouls to my being here: but this is for the place where you are to meet, and where I hope God will meet you, when I am toſſing on the water, when I am in a foreign clime. I think I can ſay thy glory, O God, calls me away, and as I am going towards ſixty years of age, I ſhall make what diſpatch I can, and I hope, if I am ſpared to come back, that I ſhall hear that ſome of you are gone to heaven, or are nearer heaven than you were. I find there is near 70l. arrears; I hope you will not run away, if you can ſay God is my glory, you will not puſh one upon another, as though you would looſe yourſelves in the croud, and ſay no body ſees me;

me; but does not God Almighty ſee you? I hope you will be ready to communicate, and when I am gone that God will be with you; as many of you will not hear me on Wedneſday morning. O may this be your prayer, O for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, in whoſe name I preach, in whoſe ſtrength I deſire to come up, and for whoſe honor I deſire to be ſpent, O do put up a word for me, it will not coſt you much time, it will not keep you a moment from your buſineſs; O Lord Jeſus Chriſt thou art his God! and, Lord Jeſus Chriſt let him be thy glory! If I die in the waters, I ſhall go by water to heaven; if I land at the Orphan Houſe, I hope it will be a means to ſettle a foundation for ten thouſand perſons to be inſtructed; and if I go by the continent, as I intend to do, I hope God will enable me to preach Chriſt; and if I return again, my life will be devoted to your ſervice. You muſt excuſe me, I cannot ſay much more, affection works; and I could heartily wiſh, and I beg it as a favour, when I come to leave you, that you will excuſe me from a particular parting with you; take my public farewell; I will pray for you when in the cabin, I will pray for you when ſtorms and tempeſts are about

me; and this ſhall be my prayer for the dear people of the Tabernale, for the dear people of the Chapel, for the dear people of London, O God, be thou their God! and grant, that their God may be their glory. Even ſo, Lord Jeſus! Amen.

SERMON

SERMON XVII.

Jacob's Ladder.

A FAREWEL SERMON.

GENESIS xxviii. ver. 12, &c.

And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder ſet upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold, the angels of God aſcending and deſcending on it. And behold, the Lord ſtood above it, and ſaid, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Iſaac: the land whereon thou lieſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy ſeed. And thy ſeed ſhall be as the duſt of the earth; and thou ſhalt ſpread abroad to the weſt, and to the eaſt, and to the north, and to the ſouth: and in thee, and in thy ſeed ſhall all the families of the earth be bleſſed. And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places, whither thou goeſt, and will bring thee again into this land:

land: for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have ſpoken to thee of.

THE wiſe man obſerves, that *in the multitude of dreams there is many vanities*, being often the effects of a peculiar diſorder of body, or owing to ſome diſturbance of the mind. They whoſe nervous ſyſtem has been long relaxed, who have had ſevere domeſtic trials, or have been greatly affected by extraordinary occurrences, know this to be true by their own experience; but however this may be, there have been, and poſſibly may be ſtill, dreams that have no manner of dependance on the indiſpoſition of the body, or other natural cauſe, but ſeem to bring a divine ſanction with them, and make peculiar impreſſions on the party, though this was more frequent before the canon of ſcripture was cloſed, than now. God ſpoke to his people in a dream, in a viſion of the night; witneſs, the ſubject of our preſent meditation, a dream of the patriarch Jacob's, when going forth as a poor pilgrim with a ſtaff in his hand, from his father's houſe, deprived of his mother's company and inſtruction, perſecuted by an elder brother, without attendants or neceſſaries,

ceſſaries, only leaning on an inviſible power. I need not inform you in how extraordinary a way he got the bleſſing, which provoked his brother to ſuch a degree, as determined him to be the death of Jacob, as ſoon as ever his aged father dropp'd: to what a height did this wicked man's envy riſe when he ſaid, *the days of mourning for my father will ſoon come*, and what then? why, though I have ſome compaſſion for the old man, and therefore will not lay violent hands upon my brother while my father is alive, yet I am reſolved to kill him before my father is cold in his grave. This is the very ſpirit of Cain, who talked to his brother, and then ſlew him: this coming to the ears of his mother, ſhe tells the good old patriarch her huſband, who loving peace and quietneſs, takes the good advice of the weaker veſſel, and orders Jacob to go to his mother's brother, Laban, and ſtay a little while out of Eſau's ſight, (perhaps out of ſight out of mind) and by and by probably, ſaid he, thou mayſt come to thy father and mother again in peace and ſafety. Jacob, though ſure of the bleſſing in the end, by his father's confirmation of it, yet prudently makes uſe of proper means; therefore he obeyed his parents:

parents: and wo, wo be to thoſe who think a parent's bleſſing not worth their aſking for! Having had his mother's bleſſing, as well as his father's, without ſaying, I will try it out with my brother, I will let him know that I am not afraid of him, he views it as the call of God, and like an honeſt, ſimple pilgrim, went out from Beerſheba towards Haran. Was it not a little unkind in his parents not to furniſh him with ſome neceſſaries and conveniencies? When the ſervant was ſent to fetch a wife for Iſaac, he had a great deal of attendance, why ſhould not Jacob have it now; his father might have ſent him away with great parade; but I am apt to believe this did not ſuit Jacob's real, pilgrim ſpirit; he was a plain man, and dwelt in tents, when, perhaps, he might have dwelt under cedar roofs; he choſe a pilgrim's life, and prudence directed him to go thus in a private manner, to prevent increaſing Eſau's envy, and giving the fatal blow.

Methinks, I ſee the young pilgrim weeping when he took his leave of his father and mother; he went on foot, and they that are acquainted with the geography of the place, ſay, that the firſt day of his journey he walked not

not leſs than forty Engliſh miles; what exerciſe muſt he have had all that way! no wonder, therefore, that by the time the ſun was going down, poor Jacob felt himſelf very weary, for we are told, ver. 11, *that he lighted on a certain place, and tarried there all night, becauſe the ſun was ſet.* There is a particular emphaſis to be put upon this term, *a certain place*; he ſaw the ſun going down, he was a ſtranger in a ſtrange land. (You that are born in England can have very little idea of it, but perſons that travel in the American woods can form a more proper idea, for you may there travel a hundred and a thouſand miles, and go through one continued tract of tall green trees, like the tall cedars of Lebanon; and the gentlemen of America, from one end to the other, are of ſuch an hoſpitable temper, as I have not only been told, but have found among them upwards of thirty years, that they would not let public houſes be licenſed, that they may have an opportunity of entertaining Engliſh friends: may God, of his infinite mercy, grant this union may never be diſſolved.)

Well, Jacob got to a certain place, and perhaps he ſaw a good tree that would ſerve

him for a canopy; however, this we are told, he tarried there all night becauſe the ſun was ſet, and he took of the ſtones of that place and put them for his pillow, and laid down in that place to ſleep; hard lodgings for him who was uſed to lie otherwiſe at home: I don't hear him ſay, I wiſh I was got back to my mother again, I wiſh I had not ſet out; but upon the hard ground and hard pillow he lies down; I believe never poor man ſlept ſweeter in his life, for it is certainly ſweet ſleep when God is near us; he did not know but his brother might follow and kill him while he was aſleep, or that the wild beaſts might devour him; (in America, when they ſleep in the woods, and I expect to have ſome ſuch ſleeping times in them before a twelvemonth is over, we are obliged to make a fire to keep the beaſts from us: I have often ſaid then, and I hope I ſhall never forget it, when I riſe in the morning, this fire in the woods that keeps the wild beaſts from hurting us, is like the fire of God's love that keeps the devil from hurting us:) thus weary and ſolitary he falls aſleep, and ſweetly dreams, *and behold*; I don't remember many paſſages of ſcripture where the word, *behold*, is repeated ſo many times in ſo ſhort a ſpace

a ſpace as in the paſſage before us, doubtleſs, the Lord would have us particularly take notice of it, even us upon whom the ends of the world are come: Behold, *a ladder ſet upon the earth, and the top reached to heaven*; *and* behold, *the angels of God aſcending and deſcending upon it*; *and* behold, *the Lord ſtood above it*; ſo here are three *beholds* in a very few lines. Was there any thing very extraordinary in that? perhaps the Deiſts would ſay, your patriarch was tired, and dreamed among other things of a ladder; yes, he did, but this dream was of God, and how kind was he to meet him at the end of the firſt day's journey, to ſtrengthen and animate him to go forward in this loneſome pilgrimage!

This ladder is reckoned by ſome to denote the providence of God: it was let down as it were from heaven, particularly at this time to poor Jacob, that he might know that however he was become a pilgrim, and left his all, all for God's glory, that God would take care for his comfort, and give his angels charge over him to keep him in all his ways, which was denoted by the angels aſcending and deſcending upon the ladder. Some think that particular ſaints and countries have particular guardian

angels, and therefore that the angels that aſcended were thoſe that had the particular charge of that place, ſo far as Jacob had come; that the angels that deſcended were another ſet of angels, ſent down from heaven to guard him in his future journey; perhaps, this is more a fancy than the word of God. However, I very much like the obſervation of good Mr. Burket, "Why ſhould we diſpute whether "every individual believer has got a particu-"lar angel, when there is not one believer "but has got guards of angels to attend him," which are a great deal better than a great many ſervants, that prove our plagues, and inſtead of waiting upon us make us wait upon them.

But, my dear hearers, I don't know one ſpiritual commentator, but agrees that this ladder was a type of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and that as Jacob was now baniſhed from his father's houſe, and while ſleeping upon a hard, cold ſtone, God was pleaſed not only to give him an aſſurance that he would be with him in the way, but gave him a bleſſed ſight of Jeſus Chriſt, in whom Jacob believed.

A ladder you know is ſomething by which we climb from one place to another; hence,

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in condeſcenſion to our weak capacities, God ordered a ladder to be let down, to ſhew us that Chriſt is the way to heaven: *I am the way, the truth, and the life; I am the door,* ſays he; neither is there ſalvation in any other, for there is no other name given under heaven whereby we muſt be ſaved. The Deiſts, who own a God but deny his Son, dare go to a God out of Chriſt; but Jacob is here taught better: how ſoon does God reveal the goſpel unto him; here is a ladder, by which God preaches to us; if you have a mind to climb from earth to heaven, you muſt get up by the Son of God; no one ever pointed out a proper way to heaven for us but himſelf. When Adam and Eve fell from God, a flaming ſword turned every way to keep them from the tree of life; but Jeſus alone is a new and living way, not only to the Holy of Holies below, but into the immediate preſence of God; and that we might know that he was a proper Saviour, the top of it reached to heaven; if it had ſtopped ſhort Jacob might have ſaid, ah! the ladder is within a little way of heaven, but does not quite reach it; if I climb up to the top I ſhall not get there after all; but the top reached to heaven, to point

out

out the divinity and exaltation of the Son of God; ſuch a Saviour became us who was God, God over all, bleſſed for evermore: and therefore the Arian ſcheme is moſt uncomfortable and deſtructive; to talk of Chriſt as a Saviour that is not God, is no Chriſt at all. I would turn Deiſt to-morrow if I did not know that Chriſt was God; *but curſed is the man that builds his faith upon an arm of fleſh.* If Chriſt is God, the Arians and Socinians, by their own principles, are undone for ever; but Jeſus Chriſt is very God and very man, begotten (and not made) of the Father: God, of his infinite mercy, write his divinity deep in our hearts!

The bottom of the ladder reached to the earth; this points out to us the humiliation of the bleſſed Lord; for us men he came down from heaven; we pray to and for a deſcending God. All the ſufferings which our Lord voluntarily expoſed himſelf to, were that he might become a ladder for you and I to climb up to heaven by. Come down from the croſs, ſay they, and we will believe thee; if he had, what would have become of us? did they believe on him when he was dead, buried, and riſen again? no. Some people ſay,

if

if Chriſt was here, O dear we ſhould love him; juſt as much as they did when they turned him out of doors, when he came down before. If he had come down from the croſs, they would have hung him up again: O that you and I might make his croſs a ſtep to glory!

As the top of the ladder pointed out his exaltation, the bottom his humiliation, the two ſides of the ladder being joined together, point out the union of the Deity and manhood in the perſon of Chriſt; and that as this ladder had ſteps to it, ſo, bleſſed be God, Jeſus Chriſt has found out a way whereby we may go, ſtep after ſtep, to glory. The firſt ſtep is the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the active and paſſive obedience of the Redeemer; no ſetting one foot upon this ladder without coming out of ourſelves, and relying wholly upon a better righteouſneſs than our own. Again, all the other ſteps are the graces of the bleſſed Spirit; therefore, you need not be afraid of our deſtroying inward holineſs, by preaching the doctrine of the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, that one is the foundation, the other the ſuperſtructure; to talk of my having the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to my ſoul, without

without my having the holineſs of Chriſt imparted to it, and bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit as an evidence of it, is only deceiving ourſelves. I would never preach upon imputed righteouſneſs, without ſpeaking of inward holineſs, for if you don't take a great deal of care, you will unawares, under a pretence of exalting Chriſt, run into Antinomianiſm, depths that Calvin never went into; probably, you will imbitter others ſpirits that don't agree with you, and at the ſame time hurt the fruits of the Spirit: may God give you clear heads, and at the ſame time warm hearts.

On the ladder Jacob ſaw the angels of God aſcending and deſcending; what is that for? to ſhow that they are miniſtring ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter to them that ſhall be heirs of ſalvation; therefore we find them attending upon Chriſt. We do not hear much of them after the canon of ſcripture was cloſed, but as ſoon as ever Chriſt was born, the angels ſang, till then we never hear of their ſinging below, as far as I can judge, ſince the creation; then the ſons of God ſhouted for joy; but when Eve reached out her hand to pluck the fatal apple, and gave to Adam, earth groaned, and the angels hung, as it were, their harps upon the

the willows; but when Chriſt, the ſecond Adam, was born, the angels ſang at midnight, *Glory to God in the higheſt.* I pray to God we may all die ſinging that anthem, and ſing it to all eternity. After his temptations, they came and miniſtred to him, as ſome think, food for his body, and wiſhed him joy and comfort in his ſoul; and in his agonies in the garden, an angel ſtrengthned him. After his reſurrection two appeared again, one at the head and another at the foot of his ſepulchre, to let thoſe that looked into the ſepulchre know, that they would not only wait upon the head but the foot; and the angels are glad to wait upon the meaneſt of the children of God. When our Lord departed, a cloud received him out of their ſight, which probably was a cloud of angels: having led his diſciples out of the city, he bleſſed them, and then away he went to heaven: may that bleſſing reſt upon you and your children! This intimates that God makes uſe of angels to attend his people, eſpecially when they are departing into eternity: perhaps, part of our entertainment in heaven will be, to hear the angels declare how many millions of times they have aſſiſted and helped us. Our Lord ſays, an-

gels do there behold the face of the Father of his little ones; and therefore I love to talk to the lambs of the flock, and why ſhould I not talk to them whom angels think it their honour to guard; and if it was not for this, how would any children eſcape the dangers they are expoſed to in their tender age? it is owing to the particular providence of God, that any one child is brought to manhood; therefore I can't help admiring that part of the Litany, in which we pray, that God would take care not only of the grown people, but of children alſo: God take care of yours both in body and ſoul.

But what gave the greateſt comfort to Jacob was, that the Lord was on the top of the ladder, which I do not know whether it would have been ſo, if Jacob had not ſeen God there. It comforts me, I aſſure you, to think, that whenever God ſhall call for me, I ſhall be carried by angels into Abraham's boſom; and I have often thought that whenever that time comes, that bleſſed, long longed-for moment comes, as ſoon as ever they have called upon me, my firſt queſtion will be to them, where is my dear maſter? where is Jeſus? where is that dear Emanuel, who has loved

loved me with an everlaſting love, and has called me by his grace, and have ſent you to fetch me home to ſee his face? But I believe you and I ſhall have no occaſion to aſk where he is, for he will come to meet us, he will ſtand at the top of his ladder to take his pilgrims in; ſo God was at the top of the ladder, pray mind that. He appears not ſitting, as he is often repreſented in heaven, but ſtanding; as much as to ſay, here, here, Jacob, thy brother wants to kill thee; here thou art come out without a ſervant, art lying upon a hard bed, but here I am ready in order to preſerve thee; I ſtand above, and I ſee thy wearineſs, I ſee the fatigue and hardſhips thou haſt yet to undergo, though thou doſt not ſee it thyſelf; thou haſt thrown thyſelf upon my providence and protection, and I will give thee the word of a God that I will ſtand by thee; *the Lord ſtood above*; if he had ſaid nothing, that would have been enough to have ſhewn his readineſs to help.

But God ſpeaks, *behold*: well might this be uſhered in with the word *behold*; a ladder ſet on the earth, and *behold* the angels of God aſcending and deſcending on it; and, above all, *behold* God ſpeaking from it! what doth

he ſay? *I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father.* Oh! happy they that can ſay, the Lord God of my father; happy you that have got fathers and mothers in heaven. I remember, about twenty-five years ago as I was travelling from Briſtol, I met with a man on the road, and being deſirous to know whether he was ſerious or not, I began to put in a word for Chriſt, (and God forbid I ſhould travel with any body a quarter of an hour without ſpeaking of Chriſt to them) he told me what a wicked creature he had been; but, ſir, ſays he, in the midſt of my wickedneſs people uſed to tell me, you have got a good many prayers upon the file for you, your godly father and mother have prayed very often for you; and it was the pleaſure of God he was wrought upon, and brought to Chriſt. Lay in a good ſtock for your children, get a good many prayers in for them, they may be anſwered when you are dead and gone. *I am the God of Abraham thy father*, not thy grandfather; to put him in mind what an honour God would put upon him, to make him as it were the father of the church. Though you have many inſtructors, ſays Paul, you have but one Father: *and the God of Iſaac, the land*

whereon

whereon thou lieſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy ſeed. Amazing! amazing! you know very well when perſons buy or come to an eſtate, they uſually take poſſeſſion of it by ſome ceremony, ſuch as receiving or taking up a piece of dirt, or twig, in their hand, as a ſign of their title. Now, ſays God, poor Jacob, thou doſt little think that this very ſpot of ground that thou lieſt on to-night, cold and ſtiff, I intend to give to thee, and thy poſterity, for an inheritance. O my brethren, live all to God, and God will give all to you: who would have thought of this, probably Jacob did not: it is as if God took a pleaſure in ſeeing his dear children lie on ſuch hard ground; if he had been on a feather-bed, he might not have had ſuch a viſit: thou ſhalt have now a God to lean upon, *to thee will I give it, and to thy ſeed, which ſhall be as the duſt of the earth, and thou ſhalt ſpread abroad to the weſt, and to the eaſt, and to the north, and to the ſouth; and in thee, and in thy ſeed, ſhall all the families of the earth be bleſſed.* Thus did heaven balance the loſs of the comforts of his father's houſe, by the diſcovery of his and his offspring's proſperity, by an intereſt in the promiſed ſeed.

My

My particular circumſtances call me to obſerve, and I believe God has done it on purpoſe to encourage me, that faith, reſting on the promiſe, is eaſily reſigned to the loſs of preſent good, whereas worldly hearts conſider proſperity as a portion, they don't care if the devil takes them hereafter, ſo they have it now; and that makes carnal people wonder how we can give up things in this world, for the ſake of thoſe not yet born; but it is to glorify God, and lay a foundation for others happineſs. Here God gives Jacob to know, that hereafter his ſeed ſhould ſpread on the eaſt, weſt, north, and ſouth, his branches ſhould multiply, and at laſt from his loins ſhould Jeſus Chriſt come; what for? *in whom all the families of the earth ſhould be bleſſed:* God Almighty grant we may be bleſſed in him.

Then if Jacob ſhould ſay in his heart, haſt thou no promiſe for me? here is another *behold* comes in; *Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goeſt.* What a word is this! thou haſt nobody with thee, nothing but a ſtaff, (he could not carry much upon his back, like a poor ſoldier with a napſack behind, and a little bread in his pocket)

pocket) well, ſaith God, I do not deſpiſe thee becauſe thou art deſtitute, but I love thee the better for it; thy brother Eſau longs to kill thee, but if Eſau ſtabs thee he ſhall ſtab thy God firſt; I will not only be with thee now, but I will watch every ſtep thou takeſt, *I will be with thee in all places whither thou goeſt:* as much as to ſay, Jacob, thou art a pilgrim, thy life is to be a moving life, I don't intend thou ſhalt ſettle and keep in one place; thy life is to be a life of changes, thou art to move from place to place, but *I will be with thee in all places whither thou goeſt*, and thereby it ſhall be known that I am Jacob's God, and alſo by my bringing thee again into this land. He not only aſſures him of a ſucceſsful journey, whither he was now going, but promiſes to bring him back once more to ſee his dear father and mother, and relations again; *I will bring thee back to this land*; and to confirm his faith and hope, the great God adds, *I will not leave thee till I have done that I have ſpoken to thee of*; that is, all the good he had juſt now promiſed. Some people promiſe, but they cannot do it to-day, and they will not do it to-morrow. I have known the world, and have rung the changes of

of it ever ſince I have been here; but, bleſſed be God, an unchangeable Chriſt having loved his own, he loved them to the end; *I will not leave you till I have performed all things I have promiſed you:* may this promiſe come upon you and your children, and all that God ſhall call.

Thus ſpake the great Jehovah to poor Jacob, juſt ſetting out to a ſtrange land, knowing not whither he went; but now God ſpeaks not only to Jacob, but he ſpeaks to you; and, bleſſed be the living God, he ſpeaks to me alſo, leſs than the leaſt of all; and as my deſign is (though I cannot tell but this may be the laſt opportunity) to ſpeak ſomething to you about my departure; yet, brethren, my grand deſign in preaching to you is, to recommend the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to your ſouls; and, before I go, to make a particular, perſonal application. Give me leave, therefore, to aſk you, it may be the laſt time I may aſk many of you, whether you have ever ſet your foot upon this bleſſed ladder, the Son of God? I aſk you in the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, did you ever ſet your foot, I ſay, upon this ladder? that is, did you ever

yet

yet believe on Jeſus Chriſt, and come to him as poor loſt ſinners, relying upon no other righteouſneſs than that of the Son of God? perhaps, if you was to ſpeak, ſome of you would ſay, away with your ladder; and what will you do then? why, ſay you, I will climb to heaven without it; what ladder will you climb upon? O, I think to go to heaven becauſe I have been baptized, that ladder will break under you; what, a ladder made of water, what are you dreaming of? no; O, I think I ſhall go to heaven becauſe I have done nobody any harm; what, a ladder made of negative goodneſs, no; I think to go, you'll ſay, by good works; a ladder made of good works, that has not Chriſt for its bottom, what is that? I think, ſay you, to go to heaven by my prayers and faſtings; all theſe are good in their place: but, my brethren, don't think to climb to heaven by theſe ropes of ſand. If you never before ſet your foot on Chriſt, this bleſſed ladder, God grant this may be the happy time.

I have been praying before moſt of you were up I believe, that God would give me a parting bleſſing. I remember, ſoon after I left England laſt, that a dear Chriſtian friend

told me, that there was one woman, who came only out of curiosity, that dated her conversion from hearing my last sermon; and, I bless God, I never once left England, but some poor soul has dated their conversion from my last sermon. When I put on my surplice, to come out to read the second service, I thought it was just like a person's being decently dressed to go out to be executed; I would rather, was it the will of God, it should be so, than to feel what I do in parting from you, then death would put an end to all; but I am to be executed again and again, and nothing will support me under the torture, but the consideration of God's blessing me to some poor souls. Do pray for me, ye children of God, that God would give us a parting blessing. God help you, young people, to put your foot on this ladder; don't climb wrong: the devil has got a ladder, but it reaches down to hell; all the devil's children go down, not up; the bottom of the devil's ladder reaches to the depths of the damned, the top of it reaches to the earth; and when death comes, then up comes the devil's ladder to let you down; for God's sake come away from the devil's ladder; climb, climb, dear young men.

O it

O it delighted me on Friday night at the Tabernacle, when we had a melting parting ſacrament; and it delighted me this morning to ſee ſo many young men at the table; God add to the bleſſed number! Young women, put your feet upon this ladder; God lets one ladder down from heaven, and the devil brings another up from hell. O, ſay you, I would climb up God's ladder, I think it is right, but I ſhall be laughed at; do you think to go to heaven without being laughed at? the Lord Jeſus Chriſt help you to climb to heaven; come, climb till you get out of the hearing of their laughter. O truſt not to your own righteouſneſs, your vows, and good reſolutions.

Some of you, bleſſed be God, have climbed up this ladder, at leaſt are climbing; well, I wiſh you joy, God be praiſed for ſetting your feet on this ladder, God be praiſed for letting down this ladder: I have only one word to ſay to you, for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, and your own too, climb a little faſter; take care the world does not get hold of your heels. It is a ſhame the children of God don't climb faſter; you may talk what you pleaſe, but God's people's lukewarmneſs is more provoking to him than all the ſins of the nation. We cry

out againſt the ſins of the land, would to God we did cry out more of the ſins of the ſaints; *I will ſpue you out of my mouth, becauſe you are lukewarm*, ſays Chriſt; and if any of you ſay you cannot climb becauſe you are lame-footed, look to Jeſus Chriſt, my dear friends, and your affliction ſhall make you climb; and if any of you are coming down the ladder again, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt bleſs the fooliſhneſs of preaching to help you up again. O, ſay you, I am giddy, I ſhall fall; here, I will give you a rope, be ſure lay hold of it; juſt as the ſailors do when you go aboard a ſhip, they let down a rope, ſo God lets down a promiſe: climb, climb, then, till you have got higher into a better climate, and God ſhall put his hand out by and by when you get to the top of the ladder to receive you to himſelf. Bleſſed be the living God, I hope and believe I ſhall meet many of you by and by.

And now, my brethren, it is time for me to preach my own funeral ſermon; and I would humbly hope that, as a poor ſinner, I may put in my claim for what God promiſed Jacob; and I do put in, with full aſſurance of faith that God will be with me. I am now going, for the thirteenth time, to croſs the

1769

Atlantic:

Atlantic: when I came from America laſt, I took my leave of all the Continent, from the one end of the provinces to the other, except ſome places which we had not then taken; I took my leave for life, without the leaſt deſign of returning there again, my health was ſo bad; and the proſpect of getting the orphan-houſe into other hands made me ſay when I firſt came over, I have no other river to go over than the river Jordan. I thought then of retiring, for I did not chuſe to appear when my nerves were ſo relaxed that I could not ſerve God as I could wiſh to do; but as it hath pleaſed God to reſtore my health much, and has ſo ordered it by his providence, that I intend to give up the orphan-houſe, and all the land adjoining, for a public college. I wiſhed to have had a public ſanction, but his grace the late archbiſhop of Canterbury put a ſtop to it; they would give me a charter, which was all I deſired, but they inſiſted upon, at leaſt his grace and another did, that I ſhould confine it totally to the Church of England, and that no extempore prayer ſhould be uſed in a public way in that houſe, though Diſſenters, and all ſorts of people, had contributed to it: I would ſooner cut my head off than

betray

betray my truſt, by confining it to a narrow bottom; I always meant it ſhould be kept upon a broad bottom, for people of all denominations, that their children might be brought up in the fear of God: by this means the orphan-houſe reverted into my hands; I have once more, as my health was reſtored, determined to purſue the plan I had fixed on; and, thro' the tender mercies of God, Georgia, (which about thirty-two years ago was a total deſolate place; and when the land, as it was given me by the Houſe of Commons, would have been totally deſerted, and the colony have quite ceaſed, had it not been for the money I have laid out for the orphan-houſe, to keep the poor people together) that colony is riſing to a moſt amazing height, by the ſchemes now going on, public buildings are erecting. I had news laſt week of the great proſperity of the negroes; and I hope by the twenty-fifth of March, which is the day, the anniverſary day, I laid the firſt brick, in the year 1739; I ſay, I hope by that time all things will be finiſhed, and a bleſſed proviſion will be made for orphans and poor ſtudents that will be brought up there; it will be a bleſſed ſource of proviſion for the children of God in another part of the world.

This

This is the grand design I am going upon; this is my visible cause; but I never yet went to them, but God has been pleased to bless my ministration among them; and therefore after I have finished the orphan-house affair, I intend to go all along the Continent by land, (which will keep me all the winter and spring) and when I come to the end of it, which will be Canada and New-England, then I hope to return again to this place; for, let people say what they will, I have not so much as a single thought of settling abroad on this side eternity; and I am going in no public capacity, I shall set out like a poor pilgrim, at my own expence, trusting upon God to take care of me, and to bear my charges; and I call God to witness, and I must be a cursed devil and hypocrite, to stand here in the pulpit and provoke God to strike me dead for lying, I never had the love of the world, nor never felt it one quarter of an hour in my heart, since I was twenty years old. I might have been rich: but though the Chapel is built, and I have a comfortable room to lie in, I assure you I built it at my own expence, it cost nobody but myself any thing. I have a watch-coat made me, and in that I shall lie every night

night on the ground, and may Jacob's God bleſs me. I will not ſay much of myſelf, but when I have been preaching, I have read and thought of thoſe words with pleaſure, *Surely this is the houſe of God. And I will bring thee again to this land.* Whether that will be my experience or not, bleſſed be God, I have a better land in view; and, my dear brethren, I do not look upon myſelf at home till I land in my Father's kingdom; and if I am to die in the way, if I am to die in the ſhip, it comforts me that I know I am as clear as the ſun, that I go by the will of God; and though people may ſay, will you leave the world? will you leave the Chapel? O, I am aſtoniſhed that we cannot leave every thing for Chriſt; my greateſt trial is, to part with thoſe who are as dear to me as my own ſoul; and however others may forget me, as thouſands have, and do forget me, yet I cannot forget them: and now may Jacob's God be with you; O keep cloſe to God, my dear London friends; I do not bid you keep cloſe to Chapel, you have done ſo always: I ſhall endeavour to keep up the word of God among you in my abſence; I ſhall have the ſame perſons that managed for me when I was out laſt, and they ſent me

me word again and again, by letter, that it was remarkable, that the Tottenham-court people were always preſent when ordinances were there.

You ſee I went upon a fair bottom; I might have had a thouſand a year out of this place if I had choſe it; when I am gone to heaven you will ſee what I have got on earth *; I do not like to ſpeak now, becauſe it may be thought boaſting; but I am ſure there are numbers of people here, if they knew what I have, would love me as much as they now hate me. When we come before the great Judge of quick and dead, while I ſtand before him, God grant you may not part with me then, it will be a dreadful parting then, it will be worſe then to go into the fire, to be among the devil and his angels; God forbid it! God forbid it! God forbid it! O remember that my laſt words were, come, come to Chriſt; the Lord help you to come to Chriſt; come to Chriſt, come to Jacob's God; God give you faith like Jacob's faith.

You that have been kind to me, that have helped me when I was ſick, ſome of whom

 are

* The greateſt part of the ſubſtance this man of God left behind him, which was not much, was bequeathed to him by deceaſed friends.

are here that have been very kind to me; may God reward you, my friends, and God forgive my enemies; God, of his infinite mercy, bleſs you all; you will be amply provided for, I believe, here; may God ſpread the goſpel every where; and may God never leave you, nor forſake you. Even ſo, Lord Jeſus. Amen and Amen.

SERMON

SERMON XVIII.

The Good Shepherd.

A FAREWEL SERMON.

JOHN x. ver. 27, 28.

My ſheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand.

IT is a common, and, I believe, generally ſpeaking, my dear hearers, a true ſaying, that bad manners beget good laws. Whether this will hold good in every particular, in reſpect to the affairs of this world, I am perſuaded the obſervation is very pertinent in reſpect to the things of another; I mean bad manners, bad treatment, bad words, have been over-ruled by the ſovereign grace of God, to produce and to be the cauſe of the beſt ſermons that were ever delivered from the mouth of the God-man, Chriſt Jeſus.

One would have imagined, that as he came cloathed with divine efficience, as he came with divine credentials, as he ſpake as never man ſpake, that no one ſhould have been able to have reſiſted the wiſdom with which he ſpake; one would imagine they ſhould have been ſo ſtruck with the demonſtration of the Spirit, that with one conſent they ſhould all own, that he was *that prophet that was to be raiſed up like unto Moſes.* But you ſeldom find our Lord preaching a ſermon, but ſomething or other that he ſaid was cavilled at; nay, their enmity frequently broke through all good manners; they often, therefore, interrupted him whilſt he was preaching, which ſhows the enmity of their hearts long before God permitted it to be in their power to ſhed his innocent blood. If we look no farther than this chapter, where he repreſents himſelf as a good ſhepherd, one that laid down his life for his ſheep; we ſee the beſt return he had, was to be looked upon as poſſeſſed or diſtracted; for we are told that there was a diviſion therefore again among the Jews for theſe ſayings, and many of them ſaid, *he hath a devil and is mad, why hear ye him?* If the maſter of the houſe was ſerved ſo, pray what are the ſer-

ſervants to expect? Others, a little more ſober-minded, ſaid, *theſe are not the words of him that hath a devil*; the devil never uſed to preach or act in this way. *Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?* So he had ſome friends among theſe rabble. This did not diſcourage our Lord, he goes on in his work; and we ſhall never, never go on with the work of God, till, like our maſter, we are willing to go through good and through evil report; and let the devil ſee we are not ſo complaiſant as to ſtop one moment for his barking at us as we go along.

We are told, that our Lord was at Jeruſalem at the feaſt of the dedication, and it was winter; the feaſt of dedication held, I think, ſeven or eight days for the commemoration of the reſtoration of the Temple and Altar after its profanation by Antiochus: now this was certainly a mere human inſtitution, and had no divine image, had no divine ſuperſcription upon it; and yet I don't find that our bleſſed Lord and Maſter preached againſt it; I don't find that he ſpent his time about this; his heart was too big with ſuperior things; and I believe when we, like him, are filled with the Holy Ghoſt, we ſhall not entertain our audi-

audiences with diſputes about rites and ceremonies, but ſhall treat upon the eſſentials of the goſpel, and then rites and ceremonies will appear with more indifference. Our Lord does not ſay, that he would not go up to the feaſt, for, on the contrary, he did go there, not ſo much to keep the feaſt, as to have an opportunity to ſpread the goſpel-net, and that ſhould be our method not to follow diſputing; and it is the glory of the Methodiſts, that we have been now forty years, and, I thank God, there has not been one ſingle pamphlet wrote by any of our preachers about the non-eſſentials of religion.

Our Lord always made the beſt of every opportunity; and we are told, *he walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.* One would have thought the Scribes and Phariſees would have put him in one of their ſtalls, and have complimented him with deſiring him to preach, no, they let him walk in Solomon's porch; ſome think he walked by himſelf, nobody chooſing to keep company with him. Methinks, I ſee him walking and looking at the temple, and foreſeeing within himſelf how ſoon it would be deſtroyed; he walked penſive, to ſee the dreadful calamities that would come

come upon the land, for not knowing the day of its viſitation; and it was to let the world ſee he was not afraid to appear in public: he walked, as much as to ſay, have any of you any thing to ſay to me? and he put himſelf in their way, that if they had any thing to aſk him, he was ready to reſolve them; and to ſhew them, that though they had treated him ſo ill, yet he was ready to preach ſalvation to them.

In the twenty-fourth verſe we are told, *Then came the Jews round about him, and ſaid unto him, how long doſt thou make us to doubt?* They came round about him when they ſaw him walking in Solomon's porch; now, ſay they, we will have him, now we will attack him. And now was fulfilled that paſſage in the Pſalms, *they compaſſed me about like bees* to ſting me, or rather like waſps. Now, ſay they, we will get him in the middle of us, and ſee what ſort of a man he is; we will ſee whether we can't conquer him; they came to him and they ſay, *how long doſt thou make us to doubt?* Now this ſeems a plauſible queſtion, *how long doſt thou make us to doubt?* Pray how long, ſir, do you intend to keep us in ſuſpenſe? Some think the words will bear this inter-

interpretation; pray, ſir, how long do you intend thus to ſteal away our hearts? they would repreſent him to be a deſigning man, like Abſalom, to get the people on his ſide, and then ſet up himſelf for the Meſſiah; thus carnal minds always interpret good mens actions. But the meaning ſeems to be this, they were doubting concerning Chriſt; doubting Chriſtians may think it is God's fault that they doubt, but God knows it is all their own. *How long doſt thou make us to doubt?* I wiſh you would ſpeak a little plainer, ſir, and not let us have any more of your parables; pray let us know who you are, let us have it from your own mouth; *if thou be the Chriſt tell us plainly*; and I don't doubt but they put on a very ſanctified face and looked very demure; *if thou be the Chriſt tell us plainly*, intending to catch him: if he does not ſay he is the Chriſt, we will ſay he is aſhamed of his own cauſe; if he does tell us plainly that he is the Chriſt, then we will impeach him to the governor, we will go and tell the governor that this man ſays he is the Meſſiah; now we know of no Meſſiah but what is to joſtle Cæſar out of his throne. The devil always wants to make it believed that God's people,

people, who are the moſt loyal people in the world, are rebels to the government under which they live; *if thou be the Chriſt tell us plainly.* Our Lord does not let them wait long for an anſwer; honeſty can ſoon ſpeak: *I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witneſs of me.* Had our Lord ſaid, I am the Meſſiah, they would have taken him up; he knew that, and therefore he joined *the wiſdom of the ſerpent* with *the innocence of the dove*; ſays he, I appeal to my works and doctrine, and if you will not infer from them that I am the Meſſiah, I have no further argument. *But*, he adds, *ye believe not, becauſe ye are not of my ſheep.* He complains twice; for their unbelief was the greateſt grief of heart to Chriſt: then he goes on in the words of our text, *My ſheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand.* My ſheep hear my voice; you think to puzzle me, you think to chagrin me with this kind of conduct, but you are miſtaken; you don't believe on me, becauſe you are not of my ſheep. The great Mr. Stodart, of New-Eng-

land, (and no place under heaven produces greater divines than New England) preached once from theſe words, *but ye believe not, becauſe ye are not of my ſheep*; a very ſtrange text to preach upon to convince a congregation, yet God ſo bleſſed it, that two or three hundred ſouls were awakened by that ſermon: God grant ſuch ſucceſs to attend the labours of all his faithful miniſters.

My ſheep hear my voice, and they follow me. It is very remarkable, there are but two ſorts of people mentioned in ſcripture; it does not ſay the Baptiſts and Independents, nor the Methodiſts and Preſbyterians; no, Jeſus Chriſt divides the whole world into but two claſſes, ſheep and goats: the Lord give us to ſee this morning to which of theſe claſſes we belong.

But it is obſervable, believers are always compared to ſomething that is good and profitable, and unbelievers are always deſcribed by ſomething that is bad, and good for little or nothing.

If you aſk me why Chriſt's people are called ſheep? as God ſhall enable me, I will give you a ſhort, and I hope it will be to you an anſwer of peace. Sheep, you know, generally love to be together; we ſay a flock of ſheep,

ſheep, we don't ſay a herd of ſheep; ſheep are little creatures, and Chriſt's people may be called ſheep, becauſe they are little in the eyes of the world, and they are yet leſs in their own eyes. O ſome people think if the great men were on our ſide, if we had king, lords, and commons on our ſide, I mean if they were all true believers, O if we had all the kings upon the earth on our ſide, ſuppoſe you had; alas! alas! do you think the church would go on the better? why, if it was faſhionable to be a Methodiſt at court, if it was faſhionable to be a Methodiſt abroad, they would go with a bible or a hymn-book inſtead of a novel; but religion never thrives under too much ſun-ſhine. *Not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe, and God hath choſen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.* Dr. Watts ſays, here and there I ſee a king, and here and there a great man in heaven, but their number is but ſmall.

Sheep are looked upon to be the moſt harmleſs, quiet creatures that God hath made: O may God, of his infinite mercy, give us to know that we are his ſheep, by our having

this bleſſed temper infuſed into our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt. *Learn of me*, ſaith our bleſſed Lord; what to do, to work miracles? no; *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.* A very good man, now living, ſaid once, if there is any one particular temper I deſire more than another, it is the grace of *meekneſs*, quietly to bear bad treatment, to forget and to forgive; and at the ſame time that I am ſenſible I am injured, not to be overcome of evil, but to have grace given me to overcome evil with good. To the honour of Moſes it is declared, that he was the meekeſt man upon earth. Meekneſs is neceſſary for people in power; a man that is paſſionate is dangerous; every governor ſhould have a warm temper, but a man of an unrelenting, unforgiving temper, is no more fit for government than Phaeton to drive the chariot of the ſun, he only ſets the world on fire.

You all know, that ſheep of all creatures in the world are the moſt apt to ſtray and be loſt; Chriſt's people may juſtly, in that reſpect, be compared to ſheep; therefore, in the introduction to our morning ſervice, we ſay, *We have erred and ſtrayed from thy ways like loſt ſheep.* Turn out a horſe, or a dog, and

and they will find their way home, but a ſheep wanders about, he bleats here and there, as much as to ſay, dear ſtranger, ſhew me my way home again: thus Chriſt's ſheep are too apt to wander from the fold; having their eye off the great ſhepherd, they go into this field, and that field, over this hedge and that, and often return home with the loſs of their wool.

But at the ſame time ſheep are the moſt uſeful creatures in the world; they manure the land, and thereby prepare it for the ſeed; they clothe our bodies with wool, and there is not the leaſt part of a ſheep but is uſeful to man: O my brethren, God grant that you and I may, in this reſpect, anſwer the character of ſheep. The world ſays, becauſe we preach faith we deny good works; this is the uſual objection againſt the doctrine of imputed righteouſneſs, but it is a ſlander, an impudent ſlander. It was a maxim in the firſt reformers time, that tho' the *Arminians* preached up good works, you muſt go to the *Calviniſts* for them. Chriſt's ſheep ſtudy to be uſeful, and to clothe all they can; we ſhould labour with our hands, that we may have to give to all thoſe that need.

Believers

Believers conſider Chriſt's property in them; he ſays, *My ſheep:* O bleſſed be God for that little, dear, great word *My*. We are his by eternal election: *the ſheep which thou haſt given me*, ſays Chriſt. They were given by God the Father to Chriſt Jeſus, in the covenant made between the Father and the Son from all eternity. They that are not led to ſee this, I wiſh them better heads; though, I believe, numbers that are againſt it have got better hearts: the Lord help us to bear with one another where there is an honeſt heart.

He calls them my ſheep, they are his by purchaſe. O ſinner, ſinner, you are come this morning to hear a poor creature take *his laſt farewel*; but I want you to forget the creature that is preaching, I want to lead you farther than the Tabernacle; where do you want to lead us? why, to Mount Calvary, there to ſee at what an expence of blood Chriſt purchaſed thoſe whom he calls his own; he redeemed them with his own blood, ſo that they are not only his by eternal election, but alſo by actual redemption in time; and they were given to him by the Father, upon condition that he ſhould redeem them by his heart's blood. It was a hard bargain, but Chriſt

Chriſt was willing to ſtrike the bargain, that you and I might not be damned for ever.

They are his, becauſe they are enabled in a day of God's power voluntarily to give themſelves up unto him; Chriſt ſays of theſe ſheep eſpecially, that *they hear his voice, and that they follow him.* Will you be ſo good as to mind that? here is an alluſion to a ſhepherd: now in ſome places in ſcripture, the ſhepherd is repreſented as going after his ſheep *; that is our way in England; but in the Eaſtern nations, the ſhepherds generally went before; they held up their crook, and they had a particular call that the ſheep underſtood. Now, ſays Chriſt, *My ſheep hear my voice. This is my beloved Son,* ſaith God, *hear ye him.* And again, *the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God, and live:* now the queſtion is, what do we underſtand by hearing Chriſt's voice?

Firſt, we hear Moſes' voice, we hear the voice of the law; there is no going to Mount Zion but by the way of Mount Sinai, that is the right ſtraight road. I know ſome ſay, they don't know when they were converted; thoſe are, I believe, very few: generally, nay I may ſay almoſt always, God deals otherwiſe.

Some

* 2 Sam. vii. 8. Pſal. lxxviii. 71.

Some are, indeed, called ſooner by the Lord than others, but before they are made to ſee the glory of God, they muſt hear the voice of the law; ſo you muſt hear the voice of the law, before ever you will be ſavingly called unto God. You never throw off your cloak in a ſtorm but you hug it the cloſer, ſo the law makes a man hug cloſe his corruptions*; but when the goſpel of the Son of God ſhines into their ſouls, then they throw off the corruptions which they have hugged ſo cloſely; they hear his voice ſaying, Son, daughter, be of good cheer, thy ſins, which are many, are all forgiven thee. *They hear his voice*; that beſpeaks the habitual temper of their minds: the wicked hear the voice of the devil, the luſts of the fleſh, the luſts of the eye, and the pride of life; and Chriſt's ſheep themſelves attended to them before converſion; but when called afterwards by God, they hear the voice of a Redeemer's blood ſpeaking peace unto them, they hear the voice of his word and of his Spirit.

The conſequence of hearing his voice, and the proof that we do hear his voice, will be to follow him. Jeſus ſaid unto his diſciples, *If*

* Rom. vii. 7, 8, 9.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his croſs and follow me. And it is ſaid of the ſaints in glory, that *they followed the Lamb whitherſoever he went.* Wherever the ſhepherd turns his crook, and the ſheep hear his voice, they follow him; they often tread upon one another, and hurt one another, they are in ſuch haſte in their way to heaven. Following Chriſt, means following him through life, following him in every word and geſture, following him out of one clime into another. *Bid me come to thee upon the water*, ſaid Peter: and if we are commanded to go over the water for Chriſt, God, of his infinite mercy, follow us! We muſt firſt be ſure that the Great Shepherd points his crook for us: but this is the character of a true ſervant of Chriſt, that he endeavours to follow Chriſt in thought, word, and work.

Now, my brethren, before we go farther, as this is the laſt opportunity I ſhall have of ſpeaking to you for ſome months if we live; ſome of you, I ſuppoſe, don't chuſe in general to riſe ſo ſoon as you have this morning; now I hope the world did not get into your hearts before you left your beds; now you are here, do let me intreat you to enquire

whether you belong to Chriſt's ſheep or no. Man, woman, ſinner, put thy hand to thy heart and anſwer me, didſt thou ever hear Chriſt's voice ſo as to follow him, to give up thyſelf without reſerve to him? I verily do believe from my inmoſt ſoul, and that is my comfort now I am about to take my leave of you, that I am preaching to a vaſt body, a multitude of dear, precious ſouls, who, if it was proper for you to ſpeak, would ſay, Thanks be unto God, that we can follow Jeſus in the character of ſheep, though we are aſhamed to think how often we wander from thee, and what little fruit we bring unto thee; if that is the language of your hearts, I wiſh you joy; welcome, welcome, dear ſoul, to Chriſt. O bleſſed be God for his rich grace, his diſtinguiſhing, ſovereign, electing love, by which he has diſtinguiſhed you and me. And if he has been pleaſed to let you hear his voice, through the miniſtration of a poor, miſerable ſinner; a poor, but happy pilgrim, may the Lord Jeſus Chriſt have all the glory.

If you belong to Jeſus Chriſt, he is ſpeaking of you; for, ſays he, *I know my ſheep.* I know them, what does that mean? why, he knows their number, he knows their names,

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he knows every one for whom he died; and if there was to be one missing for whom Christ died, God the Father would send him down again from heaven to fetch him. *Of all*, saith he, *that thou hast given me, have I lost none.* Christ knows his sheep; he not only knows their number, but the words speak the peculiar knowledge and notice he takes of them; he takes as much care of each of them, as if there was but that one single sheep in the world. To the hypocrite he saith, *Verily, I know you not*; but he knows his saints, he is acquainted with all their sorrows, their trials and temptations; he bottles up all their tears, he knows their domestic trials, he knows their inward corruptions, he knows all their wanderings, and he takes care to fetch them back again. I remember I heard good Dr. Maryat, who was a good market-language preacher, once say at Pinner's-hall, (I hope that pulpit will be always filled with such preachers) *God has got a great dog to fetch his sheep back*, says he. Don't you know that when the sheep wander, the shepherd sends his dog after them to fetch them back again? so when Christ's sheep wander, he lets the devil go after them, and suffers him to bark at them,

who, inſtead of driving them farther off, is made a means to bring them back again to Chriſt's fold.

There is a precious word I would have you take notice of, *I know them*; that may comfort you under all your trials. We ſometimes think that Chriſt does not hear our prayers, that he does not know us; we are ready to ſuſpect that he has forgotten to be gracious; but what a mercy it is that he does know us. We accuſe one another, we turn devils to one another, are accuſers of the brethren, and what will ſupport two of God's people when judged by one another but this, Lord, thou knoweſt my integrity, thou knoweſt how matters are with me?

But, my brethren, here is ſomething better, here is good news for you; what is that? ſay you; why, *I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand.* O that the words may come to your hearts with as much warmth and power as they did to mine thirty-five years ago. I never prayed againſt any corruption I had in my life, ſo much as I did againſt going into holy orders, ſo ſoon as my friends were for having me go; and biſhop Benſon was pleaſed

pleaſed to honour me with peculiar friendſhip, ſo as to offer me preferment, or do any thing for me: my friends wanted me to mount the church betimes, they wanted me to knock my head againſt the pulpit too young; but how ſome young men ſtand up here and there and preach, I don't know how it may be to them; but God knows how deep a concern entering into the miniſtry and preaching was to me; I have prayed a thouſand times till the ſweat has dropped from my face like rain, that God, of his infinite mercy, would not let me enter the church before he called me to, and thruſt me forth in his work. I remember once in Glouceſter, I know the room, I look up at the window when I am there and walk along the ſtreet; I know the window, the bedſide, and the floor upon which I have laid proſtrate: I ſaid, Lord, I cannot go, I ſhall be puffed up with pride, and fall into the condemnation of the devil; Lord, don't let me go yet; I pleaded to be at Oxford two or three years more; I intended to make an hundred and fifty ſermons, and thought I would ſet up with a good ſtock in trade however; but I remember praying, wreſtling, and ſtriving with God; I ſaid, I am undone, I am unfit

unfit to preach in thy great name, ſend me not, pray, Lord, ſend me not yet. I wrote to all my friends in town and country, to pray againſt the biſhop's ſolicitation, but they inſiſted I ſhould go into orders before I was twenty-two. After all their ſolicitation theſe words came into my mind, *nothing ſhall pluck you out of my hand.* O may the words be bleſſed to you, my dear friends, that I am parting with, as they were to me when they came warm upon my heart; then, and not till then, I ſaid, Lord, I will go, ſend me when thou wilt. I remember when I was in a place called Dover-Iſland, near Georgia, we put in with bad winds; I had an hundred and fifty in family to maintain, and not a ſingle farthing to do it with, in the deareſt part of the king's dominions; I remember, I told a miniſter of Chriſt now in heaven, I had theſe words once, ſir, *Nothing ſhall pluck you out of my hand.* O, ſays he, take comfort from them, you may be ſure God will be as good as his word, if he never tells you ſo again. And our Lord knew his poor ſheep would be always doubting they ſhould never reach heaven, therefore, ſays he, *I give to them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh.*

Here

Here are in our text three bleſſed declarations, or promiſſes:

Firſt. *I know them.*

Second. *They ſhall never periſh*; though they often think they ſhall periſh by the hand of their luſts and corruptions; they think they ſhall periſh by the deceitfulneſs of their hearts; but Chriſt ſays, *they ſhall never periſh.* I have brought them out of the world to myſelf, and do you think I will let them go to hell after that. *I give to them eternal life*; pray mind that; not I will, but I do. Some talk of being juſtified at the day of judgment, that is nonſenſe; if we are not juſtified here, we ſhall not be juſtified there. He gives them eternal life, that is, the earneſt, the pledge, and aſſurance of it; the indwelling of the Spirit of God here, is the earneſt of glory hereafter.

Third. *Neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand.* He holds them in his hand, that is, he holds them by his power, none ſhall pluck them thence; there is always ſomething plucking at Chriſt's ſheep, the devil, the luſts of the fleſh, the luſts of the eye, and the pride of life, all try to pluck them out of Chriſt's hand. O my brethren, they need not pluck us, for we help all three to pluck ourſelves

out

out of the hand of Jeſus; but *none ſhall pluck them out of my hand,* ſays Chriſt. *I give to them eternal life. I am going to heaven to prepare a place for them, and there they ſhall be.* O my brethren, if it was not for keeping you too long, and too much exhauſting my own ſpirits, I could call upon you to leap for joy; there is not a more bleſſed text to ſupport the final perſeverance of the ſaints; and I am aſtoniſhed any poor ſoul, and good people I hope too, can fight againſt the doctrine of the perſeverance of the ſaints; what if a perſon ſay they ſhould perſevere in wickedneſs? ah! that is an abuſe of the doctrine; what, becauſe ſome people ſpoil good food, are we never to eat it? But, my brethren, upon this text I can leave my cares, all my friends, and all Chriſt's ſheep to the protection of Chriſt Jeſus's never-failing love.

I thought this morning, when I came here riding from the other end of the town, it was to me like coming to be executed publicly; and when the carriage turned juſt at the end of the walk, and I ſaw you running here, O thinks I, it is like a perſon now coming juſt to the place where he is to be executed: when I went up to put on my gown, I thought it

was

was juſt like dreſſing myſelf to be made a public ſpectacle to ſhed my blood for Chriſt; and I take all heaven and earth to witneſs, and God and the holy angels to witneſs, that tho' I had preferment enough offered me, that tho' the biſhop took me in his arms, and offered me two pariſhes when I was but twenty-two years old, and always took me to his table; though I had preferment enough offered me when I was ordained, thou, O God, knoweſt, that when the biſhop put his hand upon my head, I looked for no other preferment than publickly to ſuffer for the Lamb of God: in this ſpirit I came out, in this ſpirit I came up to this metropolis. I was thinking when I read of Jacob's going over the brook with a ſtaff, that I would not ſay ſo much, but I came up without a friend, I went to Oxford without a friend, I had not a ſervant, I had not any one to introduce me; but God, by his Holy Spirit, was pleaſed to raiſe me up to preach for his great name's ſake: through his Divine Spirit I continue to this day, and feel my affections are as ſtrong as ever towards the work, and the people of the living God. The congregations at both ends of the town are dear to me: God has honoured me to

build this and the other place; and, bleſſed be his name, as he called me to Georgia at firſt, and I left all London affairs to God's care, when I had moſt of the churches in London open for me, and had twelve or fourteen conſtables to keep the doors, that people might not crowd too much; I had offers of hundreds then to ſettle in London, yet I gave it up for God, to go into a foreign clime; and I hope with that ſame ſingle intention I am going now.

When I came from America laſt, I thought I had no other river to paſs over but the river Jordan, I remember I told you ſo; and as the orphan-houſe was then to be given, I thought, out of my hands, I then intended to retire into ſome little corner, and pray when I could not preach, my ſpirits were ſo low, and my nerves and animal frame ſo weak, but God, of his infinite mercy, has renewed my ſtrength, and is pleaſed to raiſe my ſpirits, ſo that I find my heart is willing to go here or there, wherever God ſhall call.

The orphan-houſe being turned into a college is a matter of great conſequence; you that have not been in America can't tell, but I heartily wiſh, I am neither a prophet, nor the

the ſon of a prophet, and I hope none of us will ever be driven to America for an aſylum, where God's people were driven from this land an hundred years ago: clouds are growing thick, and if a ſpirit of moderation does not prevail among governors and governed, what but confuſion muſt happen to perſons who ſtrive one with another, and are making ſport for the devil by deſtroying one another? may the great and gracious God avert every impending ſtorm; and by diffuſing a ſpirit of moderation and of a ſound mind, and by keeping his people cloſe to himſelf, avert thoſe ſtorms, thoſe terrible judgments, that we have reaſon to expect from our repeated provocations. I am going now to ſettle the orphan-houſe upon a proper baſis; I go now in the fall, that I may be in Georgia in the winter, which is fine weather there. The twenty-fifth of March is the anniverſary of the day on which I laid the firſt brick of the orphan-houſe; by that time, I hope, all the buildings will be finiſhed, and the plantation ſettled; and then I hope to go and preach along the continent to New-England, and from thence I intend, if God permit me, to

return to my dear London and Engliſh friends again.

I have bleſſed news from the orphan-houſe; one writes me word, Would to God you could ſend a thouſand ſuch as you have ſent, Mr. Dixon, and his wife, that have been old ſervants there; Mr. Wright, Mr. Crayne, and Mr. Wright's brother, and thoſe that have been employed with them to carry on the work of the Lord; and I cannot think but God intends to lay a foundation for a bleſſed ſeminary for Chriſt: Lord Jeſus, hear our prayers upon that account.

Now I muſt come to the hardeſt part I have to act: I was afraid when I came out from home, that I could not bear the ſhock, but I hope the Lord Jeſus Chriſt will help me to bear it, and help you to give me up to the bleſſed God, let him do with me what he will. This is the thirteenth time of my croſſing the mighty waters; it is a little difficult at this time of life; and though my ſpirits are improved in ſome degree, yet weakneſs is the beſt of my ſtrength: but I delight in the cauſe, and God fills me with a peace that is unutterable, which nobody knows, and a ſtranger intermeddles not with: into his

his hands I commend my ſpirit; and I beg that this may be the language of your hearts, Lord, keep him, let nothing pluck him out of thy hands. I expect many a trial while I am on board, ſatan always meets me there; but that God which has kept me, I believe will keep me. I thank God, I have the honour of leaving every thing quite well and eaſy at both ends of the town; and, my dear hearers, my prayers to God ſhall be, that nothing may pluck you out of Chriſt's hands. Witneſs againſt me, if I ever ſet up a party for myſelf; did ever any miniſter, or could any miniſter in the world ſay, that I ever ſpoke againſt any one going to any dear miniſter? I thank God, that he has enabled me to be always ſtrengthning the hands of all, though ſome have afterwards been aſhamed to own me. I declare to you, that I believe God will be with me, and will ſtrengthen me; and I believe it is in anſwer to your prayers, that God is pleaſed to revive my ſpirits: may the Lord help you to pray on. If I am drowned in the waves I will ſay, Lord, take care of my London, take care of my Engliſh friends, let nothing pluck them out of thy hands.

And

And as Chriſt has given us eternal life, O my brethren, ſome of you, I doubt not, will be gone to him before my return; but, my dear brethren, my dear hearers, never mind that; we ſhall part, but it will be to meet again forever. I dare not meet you now, I can't bear your coming to me to part from me, it cuts me to the heart and quite overcomes me, but by and by all parting will be over, and all tears ſhall be wiped away from our eyes. God grant that none that weep now at my parting, may weep at our meeting at the day of judgment; and if you never were among Chriſt's ſheep before, may Chriſt Jeſus bring you now. O come, come, ſee what it is to have eternal life; don't refuſe it; haſte, ſinner, haſte away: may the great, the good ſhepherd, draw your ſouls. Oh! if you never heard his voice before, God grant you may hear it now; that I may have this comfort when I am gone that I had laſt, that ſome ſouls are awakened at the parting ſermon. O that it may be a farewel ſermon to you; that it may be a means of your taking a farewel of the world, the luſts of the fleſh, the luſts of the eye, and the pride of life.

O come,

O come, come, come, to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; to him I leave you.

And you, dear ſheep, that are already in his hands, O may God keep you from wandering; God keep you near Chriſt's feet; I don't care what ſhepherds keep you, ſo as you are kept near the great ſhepherd and biſhop of ſouls. The Lord God keep you, lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen.

F I N I S.

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